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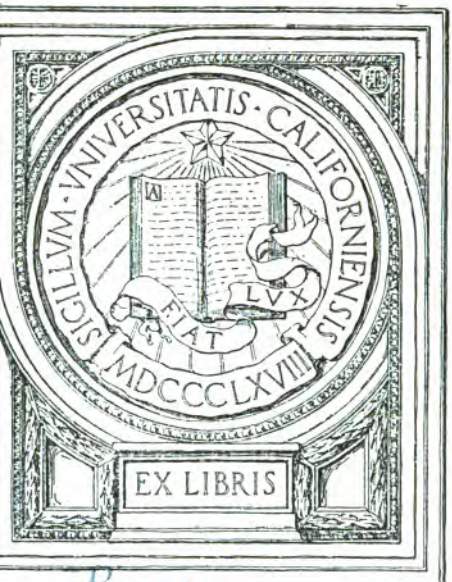

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THE

CONQUEST OF FLORIDA,

BY

HERNANDO DE SOTO.

BY THEODORE IRVING.

Son quattromila, e bene armati e bene
Instrutti, usi al disagio e tolleranti.
Buona è la gente, e non può da più dotta
O da più forte guida esser condotta.——TASSO.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA:

CAREY, LEA & BLANCHARD.

1835.

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CHAPTER I.

The Spaniards resume their march. The Princess of Cofachiqui carried away captive. A mutiny. The army traverse the territory of the Cherokees. Escape of the young Princess. Juan Terron and his pearls.

1540. On the third of May, 1540, De Soto again set forward on his adventurous course, taking with him the beautiful Princess of Cofachiqui and her train.* His route now lay towards the north or north-west, in the direction of the province of Cosa, which was said to be at the distance of twelve day's journey. As the country through which they were to march, was represented as bare of provisions, Gonzalo Silvestre and two other cavaliers were detached with a large body of horse and foot, to visit a village, twelve leagues distant, where there

* The captivity of the Princess is given on the authority of the Portuguese narrator; the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, makes no mention of it. The Portuguese narrator intimates that the Princess was treated with neglect; but this is contrary to the general conduct of De Soto towards the Caciques, whom he detained as hostages.

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was a great deposit of grain, with which they were to load themselves and rejoin the main army.

Silvestre and his companions accomplished their errand, and having taken as much maize as they could carry, hastened to rejoin the army, but were five days before they came upon its traces. When they did so, they found that the army had continued on, and must be a considerable distance ahead. Here some difficulties occurred. The foot soldiers were eager to press forward, but the troopers demurred. Three of their horses were lame and unable to travel fast, and it would not do to leave them behind, for they were considered the nerves and sinews of the army, not merely from their real services, but from the extreme awe and dread with which they inspired the savages.

A mutinous spirit evinced itself, for a time, among the foot soldiers, who dreaded being separated from the main force, and set forward by themselves in a tumultuous manner. The captains, however, threw themselves before them, and with difficulty compelled them to continue with the troopers, who were obliged to observe a slow pace, proportioned to the condition of the maimed horses.

On the following day, as they were marching under the heat of a noon-tide sun, there suddenly rose a violent hurricane, with tremendous thunder

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and lightning, and hail of such size, as to wound and bruize severely, wherever it struck. The Spaniards sheltered themselves under their bucklers, or took refuge under some large trees which were at hand. Fortunately, the hurricane was as brief as it was violent; yet they were so severely battered and bruized by the hail-stones, that they remained encamped for the remainder of that and the ensuing day.

They resumed their march on the morning of the third day, passing through various deserted hamlets, and, at length, crossed the frontiers of a province, called Xuala, where, to their great joy, they found the Adelantado and his troops encamped in a beautiful valley, and awaiting their arrival.

De Soto, in the course of his march, had passed through the province of Achalaque,* the most wretched country, says the Portuguese narrator, in all Florida. The inhabitants were a feeble, peaceful race, and nearly naked. They lived, principally, on herbs, and roots and wild-fowl, which they killed with their bow and arrows. Their Cacique brought the Governor two deer skins, and seemed to think them a considerable present. Wild hens abounded in such quantities, that in one village, the inhabitants

* Spelt Chalaque in the Portuguese narration. Supposed to be the barren country of the Cherokees.

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brought the Governor seven hundred.* Most of the inhabitants of this miserable province, had fled to the woods, on the approach of the Spaniards, leaving few in their villages, excepting the old, the blind and the infirm.

The army remained several days in Xuala, to recruit the horses.† The principal village, bearing the same name as the province, was situated on the skirts of a mountain, with a small, but rapid river, flowing by it. Here the Spaniards found maize in abundance, as well as the different kinds of fruits and vegetables common to the country.

This place was under the domination of the youthful Princess of Cofachiqui; and here, as every where else along the route, the Spaniards found the benefit of having her with them. She was always treated with great reverence by the inhabitants of the villages, who, at her command, furnished the army with provisions, and with porters to carry the baggage. And here, it is proper to observe, that De Soto endeavoured, on all occasions, as far as his means per-

* Evidently the species of Grouse, commonly called, The Prairie Hen.

† Xuala, or Choula, is supposed to have been on the site of the present town of Qualatehe, at the source of the Catahootche river.

Vide M'Culloch's Researches, Appendix, III.

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mitted, to requite the kindness of the natives; making presents to such of the chieftains as treated him with amity, and especially leaving with each of them a couple of swine, male and female, from which to raise a future stock.

On leaving Xuala, a number of the inhabitants accompanied the Spaniards, laden with provisions. The first day's march was through a country covered with fields of maize of luxuriant growth. De Soto had inclined his route to the westward, in search of a province called Quaxale, where the territories of the princess, or rather of her tributary Caciques ended. While they were on the march, the female Cacique alighted from the litter on which she was borne, and eluding the Indian slaves who had charge of her, fled into the depths of a neighbouring forest. Her escape is related by the Portuguese narrator, but no particular reason is given for it; probably, she dreaded being carried away captive beyond the bounds of her dominions. What seems to have caused some regret to the Spaniards, if we may believe the Portuguese historian, was, that she took with her a small box made of reeds, called by the Indians Petaca, which was full of beautiful unpierced pearls, of great value.* Two negro slaves and a Barbary Moor, accompanied her in her flight, and,

* Portuguese narration, c. 15.

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as was afterwards understood, were harboured and concealed by the natives, who rejoiced to have any thing remain among them, that had belonged to the white men.

During the next five days they traversed a chain of easy mountains, covered with oak and mulberry trees, with intervening valleys, rich in pasturage, and irrigated by clear and rapid streams. These mountains were twenty leagues across and quite uninhabited.* In the course of their weary march through this uninhabited tract, a foot soldier, calling to a horseman, who was his friend, drew forth from his wallet a linen bag, in which were six pounds of pearls, probably filched from one of the Indian sepulchres. These he offered as a gift to his comrade, being heartily tired of carrying them on his

* Probably the termination of the Apalachian or Allegany range, running through the northern part of Georgia. Martin, in his history of Louisiana, makes the Spaniards traverse the state of Tenessee, and even penetrate the state of Kentucky, as far north as the thirty-seventh degree of north latitude. This supposition is evidently erroneous, as both the Portuguese and Spanish chroniclers state, that, from the province of Xuala, De Soto struck in a westerly direction, and we find him in a few days on the banks of the river Canasauga.

Belknap, V. 1. p. 189, suggests that the Spaniards crossed the mountains within the thirty-fifth degree of latitude.

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back, though he had a pair of broad shoulders, capable of bearing the burthen of a mule. The horseman refused to accept so thoughtless an offer. "Keep them yourself," said he, "you have most need of them. The Governor intends shortly to send messengers to Havana, you can forward these presents, and have them sold, and three or four horses and mares purchased for you with the proceeds, so that you need no longer go on foot."

Juan Terron was piqued at having his offer refused. "Well, said he, if you will not have them, I swear I will not carry them, and they shall remain here." So saying, he untied the bag, and whiring around, as if he were sowing seed, scattered the pearls in all directions among the thickets and herbage. Then putting up the bag in his wallet, as if it was more valuable than the pearls, he marched on leaving his comrade and the other by-standers astonished at his folly.

The soldiers made a hasty search for the scattered pearls, and recovered thirty of them. When they beheld their great size and beauty, none of them being bored and discoloured, they lamented that so many had been lost; for the whole would have sold in Spain for more than six thousand ducats. This egregious folly gave rise to a common proverb in the army, that, "there are no pearls for Juan Ter-

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ron." The poor fellow himself became and object of constant jest and ridicule, until at last, made sensible of his absurd conduct, he implored them never to banter him further on the subject.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega. L. 3. c. 20.

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CHAPTER II.

Arrival of the army at Guaxule. Reception of the Spaniards by the Cacique of Ichiaha. Two troopers dispatched to the mountains in search of gold, and what success they had.

1540. HAVING made their way over this mountainous waste, the army reached the province of Guaxule. When within half a league of the principal town, they discovered the Cacique approaching, followed by a train of five hundred warriors, arrayed in rich mantles of various skins, and adorned with gaily coloured feathers. In this state he advanced to the Governor, received him with great courtesy and escorted him to his village, which consisted of three hundred houses. It stood in a pleasant spot bordered by small streams that took their rise in the adjacent mountains. The Governor was quartered in the house of the Cacique, which stood on a mound, and was surrounded by a terrace, wide enough for six men to go abreast.

Here De Soto halted four days to obtain information respecting the neighbouring country; during

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which time the Cacique made him a present of three hundred dogs, the flesh of which the Spaniards used as food; though they were not eaten by the natives.* The many streams that traverse this province, soon mingled their waters, and formed a grand and powerful river, along which the army resumed their journey.†

On the second day of their march, they entered the small town of Canasauga,‡ where they were met by twenty Indians, bearing baskets of mulberries, a fruit which abounded in this region, as did likewise the nut and plum trees. Continuing forward for five days, through a desert country, on the 25th of June they came in sight of Ichiaha,§ thirty leagues from Guaxule.

This village stood on one end of an island, more than five leagues in length. The Cacique came out to receive the Governor, and gave him a friendly welcome; his warriors treated the soldiers in the same kind and frank manner. They crossed the river in many canoes, and on rafts prepared for the

* Portuguese Relation, c. 15.

† Mr. M'Culloch suggests that this river was the Etowee, which falls into the Coosa.

‡ This Indian Village has probably given the name to the Connesaugo one of the small tributaries of the river Coosa.—Vide M'Culloch's Researches, p. 525.

§ This is spelt Chiaha in the Portuguese Narration.

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purpose, and were quartered by the Indians, in their houses. Most of the soldiers, however, encamped under the trees around the village, and their worn out horses enjoyed rich and abundant pasturage in the neighbouring meadows. The Spaniards found in this village a quantity of bears' grease preserved in pots, and likewise oil made from the walnut, and a pot of honey. The latter they had not seen before, nor did they ever again meet with it during their wanderings.

While in the town of Ichiaha, the Governor, as usual, was diligent in his enquiries after the precious metals. In reply, the Cacique informed him, that about thirty miles to the northward, there was a province called Chisca, where there were mines of copper, and also of another metal of the same colour, but finer and brighter. It was not used by the natives as much as copper, because it was softer, but they sometimes melted them together. This intelligence aroused the attention of De Soto. It agreed with what he had been told at Cofachiqui, where he had met with small axes of copper, mingled with gold. He determined to set off in search of the mines, but the Cacique informed him that to reach them he would have to traverse an uninhabited wilderness, and mountains impassable for horses. He advised him, therefore, to send persons to visit the province of Chisca, and offered to furnish them with guides.

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De Soto adopted his advice. Juan de Villalobos and Francisco de Silvera, two fearless soldiers, forthwith volunteered for the enterprize, and accordingly set off on foot, leaving their horses behind, as they would only delay and embarrass them in the rough country they would have to traverse.

After an absence of ten days, they returned to the camp, and made their report. Their route had lain part of the way through excellent land for grain and pasturage, where they had been well received, and feasted by the natives. They had found among them a buffalo hide, an inch in thickness, with hair as soft as the wool of a sheep, which, as usual, they mistook for the hide of a beef. In the course of their journey they had crossed mountains, so rugged and precipitous that it would be impossible for the army to traverse them. As to the yellow metal of which they had heard, it proved to be nothing but a fine kind of copper or brass, such as they had already met with; but from the appearance of the soil, they thought it probable both gold and silver might exist in the neighbourhood.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, L. 3, c. 20. Portuguese Relation, c. 16. The mountains here mentioned are supposed to be the Apalachian chain, running through the northern part of Alabama. The existence of gold in various parts of the Southern States, ascertained of late years, proves that many of these Indian reports were founded in truth.

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CHAPTER III.

The manner in which the Indians extracted the pearls from the shell. Generosity of a soldier. What befel Luis Bravo de Xeres while fishing

1540. During the time that De Soto had remained at the village awaiting the return of the two soldiers from the mines, several circumstances had occurred. The Cacique came one day to the Governor, bringing him a present of a string of pearls, two arms in length. The pearls were as large as filberts, and, had they not been bored by means of fire, would have been of immense value. De Soto thankfully received them, and in return presented the Indian with pieces of velvet, and cloth of various colours and other Spanish trifles, held in much esteem by the natives. In reply to the demand of the Governor, the Cacique said that the pearls were obtained in the neighbourhood; that in the sepulchre of his ancestors was amassed a prodigious quantity, and that they were welcome to carry away as much as they pleased. The

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Adelantado thanked him for his good will, but replied that much as he wished for pearls, he never would insult the sanctuary of their ancestral tombs to obtain them; and added, that he only accepted the string of pearls as a present from his hands.

As De Soto expressed a curiosity to see the manner of extracting the pearls from the shells, the Cacique instantly despatched forty canoes to fish for oysters during the night. At an early hour next morning, a quantity of wood was gathered and piled up on the banks of the river, and being set on fire, was speedily reduced to glowing coals. As soon as the canoes arrived, the coals were spread out and the oysters laid upon them. They soon opened with the heat, and from some of the first thus opened, the Indians obtained ten or twelve pearls as large as peas, which they brought to the Governor and Cacique, who were standing together looking on. The pearls were of a fine quality, but somewhat discoloured by the fire and smoke. The Indians were prone also to injure their pearls, by boring them with a heated copper instrument.

De Soto having gratified his curiosity, returned to his quarters to partake of the morning meal. While eating, a soldier entered with a large pearl

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in his hand. He had stewed some oysters, and in eating them, felt this pearl between his teeth. Not having been injured by fire or smoke, it retained its beautiful whiteness, and was so large and perfect in its form, that several Spaniards who pretended to be skilled in these matters, declared it would be worth four hundred ducats in Spain. The soldier would have given it to the Governor to present to his wife, Doña Isabel de Bobadilla, but De Soto declined the generous offer, advising the soldier to preserve it until he got to Havana, where he might purchase horses and many other things with it; moreover, in reward of his liberal disposition, De Soto insisted upon paying the fifth of the value, due to the crown.

About this time, a cavalier, one Luis Bravo de Xeres, strolling, with lance in hand, along a plain bordering on the river, saw a small animal at a short distance, and launched his weapon at it. The lance missed the mark, but, slipping along the grass, shot over the river bank. Luis Bravo ran to recover his lance, but to his horror found it had killed a Spaniard, who had been fishing with a reed on the margin of the river, at the foot of the bank. The steeled point of the lance had entered one temple and came out at the other, and the poor Spaniard had dropped dead on the spot. His name was

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Juan Mateos; he was the only one in the expedition that had gray hairs, from which circumstance he was universally called father, and respected as such. His unfortunate death was lamented by the whole army.

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CHAPTER IV.

How they were treated by the Cacique of Acoste, at whose village they arrived. The manner in which the young Cacique Cosa, came forth to meet them. The Indians show a hostile disposition. The Cacique Cosa, escorts them to Talise, and why.

1540. On the ensuing day, after the return of the soldiers from the mines of Chisca, the Governor departed from the village of Ichiaha, leaving the natives well contented with the presents they had received in return for their hospitality.

This day he marched the length of the Island, and at sunset, on the 2d of July, came in sight of the village of Acoste, built on the extreme point.* The army encamped about a cross-bow shot from the town, while De Soto proceeded, accompanied by a guard of eight troopers, to visit the Cacique.

* The Portuguese Narrator says, this town was seven days' journey from Ichiaha. The Inca is probably the most correct, as he states the length of the Island to be about five leagues, which would not be more than a day's march.

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This Chieftain was a fierce warrior, and placed himself in battle array, at the head of fifteen hundred of his braves, who were decorated with their war plumes, and equipped with arms. He received the Governor with great courtesy, and appeared very kindly disposed; but while they were conversing together, some of the foot soldiers had arrived, and began rifling and pillaging the houses. The Indians, exasperated at this outrage, seized some war-clubs that were at hand, and assailed them. De Soto saw at a glance the peril of his situation, surrounded as he was by enemies. With his wonted presence of mind, he seized a cudgel and began beating his own men, at the same time that he secretly despatched a trooper to order the horse to arm and come to his rescue. This attack upon his own followers, as if he was indignant at their conduct, re-assured the Indians. De Soto then prevailed upon the Cacique to visit the encampment with his chief warriors, and no sooner had the Indians left the village with this intent, than the troopers surrounded them and carried them off prisoners.* Notwithstanding their captivity, they maintained an arrogant air, answering every question insolently, shaking their fists, and insulting the Spaniards with taunts and menaces, until they lost

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 16.

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all patience, and were only restrained from coming to blows by the earnest commands and entreaties of the Adelantado. This night they posted sentries, and kept as vigilant a watch as though they were in an enemy's country.

On the following day, the Indians were more peaceable and friendly, and the Cacique furnished the Governor with maize for his journey, and offered him any thing else in his dominions. A message received from Ichiaha was the cause of this civility. De Soto thanked him for his offer, liberated him and his warriors, and in return for the maize, made him presents that greatly pleased him. The same morning they left the village, and crossed the river on rafts and in canoes, rejoicing at having extricated themselves from this village, without any bloodshed.

They now traversed more than a hundred leagues of a fertile and populous province, called Cosa, journeying at the rate of four leagues a day; sometimes lodging in the hamlets, sometimes camping in the fields. Throughout the whole distance they were treated with the utmost kindness by the inhabitants, who quartered them in their houses, supplied their wants, and escorted them from one village to another. In this way they travelled for twenty-four days, until they came in sight of the

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village of Cosa, from which the province took its name. This was the residence of the Cacique, from whom they had received repeated and friendly messages in the course of their journey. He came forth to meet them in a kind of litter, borne upon the shoulders of four of his chief warriors. From his shoulders hung a mantle of martin skins, fashioned much after the manner of the mantles worn by Spanish females, and on his head was a diadem of feathers. Several Indians walked beside his rude chariot, singing and playing upon instruments.*

He was a young man about twenty-six years of age, of a fine person and noble countenance, and was attended by a train of a thousand warriors, tall and well formed, as were generally the people of this country. They were in their finest array, with lofty plumes of rich and varied colours, and mantles of various fine skins, many of them of martins, scenting of musk. They were marshalled in squadrons, and with their gay plumes waving in the breeze, made a brilliant appearance.

The village was situated on the banks of a river,† amidst green and beautiful meadows, irrigated by

* Portuguese Relation, c. 16.

† Supposed to be the river Coosa, which takes its rise in the Apalachian mountains and empties into the Alabama. From the

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numerous small streams. The country around was populous and fruitful; the houses were well stored with maize and a small kind of bean; and fields of Indian corn extended from village to village. There were plums of various kinds; some like those of Spain, others peculiar to the country. Grape vines clambered to the tops of the trees which overhung the river. There were others in the fields, with low stocks and very large sweet grapes.*

The village contained five hundred dwellings, and as they were very spacious the captains and soldiers were all accomodated. The Governor was quartered in the residence of the Cacique.

De Soto often took the precaution in populous villages, where there was any danger to be apprehended from the inhabitants, to surround the Cacique with guards, which kept him in a kind of honourable durance, and preventing his escaping to any fastness. In this way he served as a hostage to ensure the peaceful conduct of his subjects. It was

site and description of the village, Mr. M'Culloch presumes it to be the same called in the maps "Old Coosa" situated on the river of the same name in north latitude, about 33° 30'.—See M'Culloch's Researches, p. 525.

* Portuguese Relation, c. 16. This is supposed to have been the same native grape, called the Isabella, which has since been cultivated.—Vide Bancroft, Hist. U. S. c. 2, p. 54.

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also a part of the Governor's policy, as has been already shown, to carry the Cacique along with him, as he marched through his dominions; by which means he secured a supply of guides from the villages, and of Indians to attend upon the army and carry the baggage. In their marching, the Cacique was always treated with great respect and ceremony, and had fine raiment given him; and if so inclined, a horse furnished him on which to ride. On arriving at the territories of another Cacique, the preceding one and his subjects were dismissed at the frontier.

The Indians of Cosa were indignant at the restraint put upon their Cacique; and manifested a hostile disposition towards the Spaniards. Several of them were taken prisoners and put in chains, but after a little time, the most of them, at the intercession of the Cacique, were set at liberty.* After this a good understanding prevailed, and the Spaniards were hospitably entertained during twelve days that they remained in the village.

The Cacique would fain have persuaded the Governor to make this place his residence and seat of government, or at least to winter there; but De Soto was anxious to arrive at the bay of Achusi, where he had appointed Captain Diego Maldonado to meet him in the autumn. Since leaving the pro-

* Portuguese Relation, c. 16.

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vince of Xuala, therefore, he had merely made a bend through the country, and was now striking southwardly for the sea coast.

During their sojourn in this village, a soldier of low and dissolute character, deserted, and concealed himself among the natives, so that he could not be found. A negro, also, who was too infirm to travel, was left in charge of the Cacique.

On the 20th of August, the Governor departed from Cosa, taking with him as usual, the Cacique and many of his warriors, with a train of his subjects, bearing provisions. At one of the villages named Ullabali, a number of Indian braves came forth, painted and plumed, with bows and arrows in their hands. They welcomed the Spaniards in the name of their Cacique, and escorted the Governor into the town, where he found all their men in arms, and judged by their hostile looks that they meditated some out-break. In fact, he was afterwards informed that they had intended to attempt the rescue of the Cacique Cosa, had he seemed to approve their design; but the Cacique gave them no encouragement.* The army continued forward to the frontier town of Talise.†

* Portuguese Relation, c. 17.

† Supposed to be the same with Tallassee, lying at the elbow of Talapoosa river.—M'Culloch, p. 525. Spelt in the Portuguese Narration Tallise.

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This was an important Indian post, fortified with ramparts of earth and strong pallisades, and situated on the bank of a very rapid river which nearly surrounded it. Though subject to the Cacique of Cosa, it was represented as being disaffected to his rule, and inclined to revolt in favour of a powerful chieftain of the neighbourhood named Tascaluza. It was supposed, therefore, that the Cacique of Cosa had gladly accompanied the Spaniards to this frontier town, in hopes of overawing his refractory subjects, and even his formidable neighbour, by appearing in company with such redoubtable allies.

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CHAPTER V.

The gigantic chieftain Tuscaluza. His haughty reception of the Spaniards. Great sufferings of the army for the want of salt. Strange malady occasioned thereby.

1540. TUSCALUZA, the Cacique, on whose frontiers the Spaniards had now arrived, appears to have been one of the most potent, proud and warlike of the native chieftains of the south. His territories must have comprised a great part of what are now the states of Alabama and Mississippi, and he is one of the few of the native heroes who have left local memorials behind them. The river Tuscaloosa,* which waters his native valley, bears his name, and it has likewise been given to the capital of the state.

This chieftain had heard, with solicitude, of the approach of the Spaniards to his territories, and probably feared some hostility on their part, in combination with his rival, the Cacique of Cosa. He sent, therefore, his son, a youth of eighteen years of age, attended by a train of warriors, on an embassy to

* Likewise called the Black Warrior River.

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De Soto, proffering him his friendship and services, and inviting him to his residence, which was about thirteen leagues from Talise. The young ambassador was of a noble stature, taller than any Spaniard or Indian in the army, and acquitted himself in his mission with great grace and courtesy. The Governor was struck with his appearance and manners, and received and entertained him in a distinguished manner; dismissing him with presents for himself and his father, and assurances that he accepted the friendship of the latter and would visit him shortly. He accordingly crossed the river with his army, in canoes and on rafts, it being too deep at Talise to be forded, and then set forward on his march, taking with him a number of the subjects of the Cacique of Cosa. As to the Cacique, himself, being on the frontiers of his province, he took a friendly leave of the Spaniards.

On the second night they encamped in a wood, about two leagues from the village in which the Cacique of Tuscaluza was quartered, which, however, was not the capital of his province. From hence De Soto set off at an early hour of the morning for the village, preceded by his camp-master-general and several of the cavaliers.

The Cacique had already received notice from his scouts, that the Spaniards were at hand, and had

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made some preparations to receive them in state. They found him posted on the crest of a hill, which commanded a wide view over a rich and beautiful valley. He was seated on a kind of stool, made of wood, somewhat concave, but without back or arms; such was the simple throne used by the Caciques of the country. Around him stood a hundred of his principal men, dressed in rich mantles and plumes. Beside him was his standard-bearer, who bore on the end of a lance a dressed deer-skin, stretched out to the size of a buckler. It was of a yellow colour, traversed by three blue stripes. This was the great banner of this warrior chieftain, and the only military standard that the Spaniards met with throughout the whole of their expedition.

Tuscaluza, or Tuscaloosa, (to adopt the modern mode of writing the name,) appeared to be about forty years of age; and his person corresponded to the formidable reputation which he bore throughout the country. Like his son, he was gigantic in his proportions, being a foot and a half taller than any of his attendants. His countenance was handsome though severe, shewing the loftiness and ferocity of his spirit. He was broad across the shoulders, small at the waist, and so admirably formed, that the Spaniards declared him altogether the finest looking Indian they had yet beheld.

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The haughty chieftain took not the least notice of the cavaliers and officers of the camp, who preceded De Soto; although they arranged themselves in his presence. The troopers sought in vain to excite his attention, by making their horses curvet and caracole as they passed, and sometimes spurring them up to his very feet. He still maintained the most imperturbable gravity, or cast his eyes now and then upon them in a haughty and disdainful manner.

When De Soto, however, approached, the Cacique arose and advanced fifteen or twenty paces to receive him. The Governor alighted and embraced him, and they remained in the same place conversing, while the troops proceeded to take up the quarters allotted them, in and about the village. After this, the Cacique and the Governor proceeded, hand in hand, to the quarters prepared for the latter, which was in a house near to that of Tuscaloosa. Here the Cacique left him, and retired with his Indians; but De Soto, who knew his haughty and warlike character, took care to have a vigilant watch kept upon his movements.*

A strange malady about this time broke out among the Spaniards, which was attributed to the want of salt; with some the consequences were fatal. After

* Garcilaso de la Vega, L. 3. c. 24. Portuguese Relation, c. 17.

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a little while they were seized with a low fever, and the surface of the body became discoloured and of a greenish hue, from the breast downward. At the end of three or four days, their bodies emitted a fetid odour, that might be perceived at several paces distance, and they perished of a general mortification of the intestines. A few cases of the kind spread horror through the camp; for no one knew how to treat the disorder. In this dilemma some adopted a remedy or preventive, recommended by the Indians; a lye made from the ashes of a certain herb, and used with their food, instead of salt. Those who made use of this condiment escaped the fatal mortification of the bowels; others, who spurned at it as nauseous, or as the quackery of ignorant savages, fell victims to their prejudices. Some adopted it, but too late, for, when the fever and its accompanying mortification had once seized upon the patient, the lye was no longer effectual. So much did the the Spaniards suffer for the want of salt during their long marchings in the interior, that one of the historians of the expedition attributes to this cause alone the death of more than sixty in the course of a year.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, L. 4. c. 3.

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CHAPTER VI.

Tuscaloosa, his steed and raiment. His village. Mysterious disappearance of two soldiers. Arrival at the village of Mauvila.

1540. After reposing two days in the village, the Governor continued his march, accompanied by Tuscaloosa, whom he kept with him for his own security. De Soto ordered, as usual, that a horse should be provided for the Cacique; but for some time they sought in vain for a steed of sufficient size and strength to bear so gigantic a rider. At length they found a stout hackney, belonging to the Governor, which, from its powerful frame, was used as a pack-horse; yet when the Cacique bestrode him his feet nearly touched the ground. The Governor had given Tuscaloosa a dress of scarlet cloth, and a flowing mantle of the same, which, with his towering plumes, added to the grandeur of his appearance, and made him conspicuous among the steel-clad warriors around him.

At the end of three days' march, of four leagues each, they arrived at the principal village called

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Tuscaloosa,* from which the province and the Cacique derived their name. It was a strong place, situated like Talise, upon a peninsula formed by the windings of the same river, which had here grown wider and more powerful.†

During the next day they were busily employed in passing the river on light rafts made of reeds and dry wood, the inhabitants not having any canoes. As the river was gentle, the troops crossed it without difficulty, but the day being exhausted, they encamped for the night in a beautiful valley about a league beyond.

On the following morning two soldiers were missing. One of them, named Juan de Villalobos, was much given to wander away by himself to explore the country, and it was supposed that they had strayed away together, and been either lost in the woods or cut off by the natives. De Soto enquired after them of the Indians who accompanied Tuscaloosa:

* This town is called Piache by the Portuguese Narrator.

† It is supposed that this was really the Alabama river, formed by the confluence of the Coosa and Talapoosa, (the latter being the stream which flowed by Talise). There is a ford on the Alabama, about sixty leagues above its confluence with the Tombecbe, which the Choctaws called Taskaloussas. Here the army may have crossed. Vide M'Culloch, p. 525; Bossus' Travels in Louisiana, p. 282.

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they were abrupt and insolent in their replies. "Why do you ask us about your people?" said they; "Are we responsible for them? Did you place them under our charge?"

The suspicions of De Soto were the more awakened by these replies. He had high words with the Cacique on the subject, and threatened to detain him hostage until the Spaniards should be produced. Seeing this menace was of no avail, he concluded that the soldiers had been massacred; and dissembled his indignation for the present, lest he might create difficulties and delay his progress. He continued forward, therefore, and in company with Tuscaloosa, apparently on amiable terms, but they were secretly distrustful of each other, and the Cacique felt that he was a kind of prisoner. In the course of their march, Tuscaloosa despatched one of his people ahead, to a town called Mauvila,* under pretext of ordering a supply of provisions and Indian attendants for the army. The third day their route had been through a very populous country and they were drawing near to Mauvila. At a very early hour the next morning, De Soto called to him two picked and confidential men, named Gonzalo Quadrado Xaramillo, and Diego Vazquez, and sent them in the advance, to enter the village, ob-

* Maville, in the Portuguese account.

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serve what was going on there, and await his arrival.

He then mustered a hundred horse and a hundred foot as a vanguard, and set off with them for the village, ordering Luis de Moscoso, the camp-master general, to follow speedily with the residue of the forces. The Cacique Tuscaloosa, accompanied the Governor; being evidently retained about him as a kind of hostage.

About eight o'clock in the morning of October the 18th, they arrived before the village of Mauvila.* This was the strong hold of the Cacique

* This town is supposed to have stood on the north side of the Alabama, about the junction of that river with the Tombecbe, within a hundred miles from Pensacola. There is little doubt that it gave the name to the present river and bay of Mobile. The letters *v* and *b* are often used indifferently in Spanish, in place of each other, and articulated in nearly the same manner. Charlevoix, in his Journal Historique, Let. 33, p. 452, says, "Garcilaso de la Vega, dans son Histoire de la Floride, parle d'une Bourgade appellée *Mauvila*, la quelle a sans doute donnée son nom à la Rivière, et à la nation, qui était établié sur ses bords. Ces Mauviliens étaient alors tres-puissans; à peine en reste-ti'l adjourd'hui quelques vestiges." In the account of these marchings, and of the affairs at Mauvila, I have collated the narratives of the Inca and the Portuguese author, and have availed myself of both accounts, where they were not totally irreconcilable. The Inca, as usual, is much the most minute, graphic, and characteristic, and supports his main authority in various places, by extracts from the journals of the two soldiers.

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where he and his principal men resided; and, being on the frontiers of his territories, it was strongly fortified. It stood in a fine plain, and was surrounded by a high wall formed of huge trunks of trees driven into the ground, side by side, and wedged together. These were crossed within and without by others smaller and longer, bound to them by bands made of split reeds and wild vines. The whole was thickly plastered over with a kind of mortar, made of clay and straw trampled together, which filled up every chink and crevice of the wood-work, so that it appeared as if smoothed with a trowel. Throughout its whole circuit, the wall was pierced at the height of a man, with loop-holes, from whence arrows might be discharged at an enemy, and at every fifty paces it was surmounted by a tower, capable of holding seven or eight fighting men. Numbers of the trees which had been driven into the ground had taken root, and flourished, springing up loftily out of the rampart, and spreading their branches above it, so as to form a circle of foliage around the village. There were but two gates to the place, one to the east, the other to the west. In the centre of the village was a large square, around which were erected the principal dwellings. The whole number of houses in the place did not exceed eighty, but they were of great size, capable of lodg-

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ing from five to fifteen hundred persons each. They were built after the Indian fashion, not cut up into different rooms, but consisting simply of one great hall, like a church; and as they belonged either to the Cacique or his principal subjects, they were constructed with more than usual skill.*

* The description of Mauvila is entirely from the Inca.

* Garcilaso de la Vega. L. 3. c. 20.

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CHAPTER VII.

The disastrous battle of Mauvila.

1540. When the Governor and the van guard appeared before the town, a splendid train of warriors came forth to receive them, painted and decorated, and clad in robes of skins and flaunting feathers of every brilliant colour. These came singing and dancing and playing on rude instruments of music. To these succeeded a band of young damsels, beautiful in form and feature, as were generally the natives of this part of the country.

In this way the Governor entered the village, side by side with the Cacique in his flaming mantle of scarlet, followed by a train of horsemen in glittering armour, and preceded by dancing groups of Indians. Having arrived in the square, they alighted, and the Governor ordered that the horses should be taken outside of the village and tethered until their quarters were prepared for them. The Cacique then called to Juan Ortiz, the interpreter, and pointed out one of the largest houses as the quar-

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ters for the Governor and his principal officers, and an adjacent one for his servants and attendants; as to the rest of the troops, they were to be lodged in cabins of bark and branches, prepared for their reception, about a bow shot without the walls. The Governor was not well pleased with an arrangement which would separate him from his troops, but replied that it should be attended to when the camp-master arrived. The Cacique then signified a wish to be left to himself, and to remain at that village, but was given to understand that he must still continue with De Soto. The haughty spirit of Tuscaloosa rose within him, at being thus kept in thraldom. He told the Governor that he might depart in peace, whenever he pleased; but that he must not pretend to carry him out of his country and dominions. So saying, he entered a house, where some of his subjects were assembled, armed with bows and arrows. The moment he was gone, Gonzalo Quadrado Xaramillo, one of the cavaliers who had been sent ahead to observe the movements of the Indians, approached the Governor, and reported that various circumstances had led him to suspect some dark and treacherous plot. He stated, that in the few houses in sight, there were more than ten thousand chosen warriors assembled; not one of them old, or of the servile class, but all

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fighting men, noble and young, and well armed; and that many of the houses were filled with weapons. Not a child was to be found in the place; and though there were many females, they were all young girls. The inhabitants, too, had been diligently employed in strengthening the palisades around the town, and in clearing the fields, for the distance of a musket shot round the village, so that the very roots and herbage had been pulled up by the hand; as if all had been prepared for a fighting ground.

The Governor pondered for a moment, then directed word to be passed secretly from one to the other, among the troopers, to hold themselves ready for action; he also charged Xaramillo to communicate all that he had observed to the master of the camp, the moment he should arrive, that he might make his arrangements accordingly. In the mean time, he determined to wear a friendly aspect, and endeavour to conciliate the Cacique by courteous treatment.

Word was now brought him, that his servants had prepared the morning's meal in one of the houses which looked upon the square. The Governor immediately sent Juan Ortiz to invite the Cacique to the repast, as they were accustomed to eat together.

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Juan Ortiz presented himself at the door of the large house into which the Cacique had entered, but several Indians met him at the threshold, and refused him admittance. The message he brought was passed in to the Cacique, and word returned that he would come to the Governor immediately.

Some time having elapsed without his appearance, Juan Ortiz presented himself with a second message, and received a similar reply. After another interval he returned a third time, and called out, "Tell Tuscaloosa to come forth; the food is upon the table, and the Governor is waiting for him."

Upon this, there sallied forth an Indian, who appeared to be the General. He was in a furious heat, and his eyes flashed fire. "Who are these robbers! these vagabonds!" cried he, "who keep calling to my Chief, Tuscaloosa, come out! come out! with as little reverence as if he were one of them? By the sun and moon! this insolence is no longer to be borne. Let us cut them to pieces on the spot, and put an end to their wickedness and tyranny."

Scarce had he spoken these words, when another Indian stepped up behind him, and placed in his hand a bow and arrows. The Indian General threw back from his shoulders the folds of a superb mantle of martin skins, which was buttoned round

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his neck, and, baring his arm, drew to the head an arrow, levelled at a knot of Spaniards in the square. Before he had time to wing the shaft, a blow from the sword of Baltasar de Gallegos laid open the whole of the side exposed by throwing back his mantle: his entrails gushed forth, and he fell dead on the spot.*

His son, a youth of eighteen years of age, of a noble demeanour, sprang to avenge his death, and let fly six or seven arrows as fast as he could draw them; but, seeing that they struck harmless upon the armour of Gallegos, he took his bow in both hands, and, closing with him, dealt him three or four blows over the head, with such rapidity and force, that the blood sprang from beneath his casque, and ran over his forehead. Gallegos, as soon as he could recover from the surprise, gave him two thrusts in the breast with his sword, that laid him dead at his feet.

The war whoop now rang throughout the village. Torrents of warriors ready armed, poured out of every house, attacking the Spaniards who were scattered about the principal street. Though overwhelmed with numbers, the Spaniards kept a bold face to the enemy, fighting stoutly, and disputing

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 13.

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the ground inch by inch, until they retreated out of the city, leaving five of their number slain.

Numbers of the cavalry, who had tethered their horses in the purlieus of the village, and returned into the street, seeing the furious onset of the savages, ran out of the gate to the places where their steeds were tied. Those who made most speed were enabled to mount on horseback. Others, who lingered, had only time to cut the reins or halters of their horses and drive them off; while others, still more pressed, were obliged to leave their horses tied, and abandon them to their fate; having the grief to see them shot down by innumerable arrows, amidst the exulting yells of the savages.

The enemy being in great force, divided into two bands; one to fight with the retreating Spaniards, the other to kill the horses, and gather the baggage and effects of the army, which had by this time arrived, and lay heaped along the wall and about the fields. Every thing thus fell into the hands of the enemy, excepting the baggage of Captain Andres de Vasconcellos, which had not yet arrived. The spoils were conveyed by the Indians into the village with great triumph, and put into their houses; and they knocked off the chains of the slaves, who carried the baggage, and gave them weapons to fight with.

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In the mean time the few cavaliers who had been able to mount their horses, together with a few other horsemen who had just arrived from the main body, joined their forces and endeavoured to protect their comrades who were fighting on foot. The approach of the cavalry checked the impetuosity of the savages, and gave time for the Spaniards to rally and form themselves into two bands, one of horse the other of foot. They then charged the enemy with a fury, inspired by their recent maltreatment, and drove them back into the village. They would have followed them in, but were assailed with such showers of stones and arrows, from the wall and the loop holes, that they were compelled to draw back.

The Indians seeing them retreat, again rushed forth, some by the gate, others letting themselves down from the wall; and, closing with the Spaniards, seized hold of the very lances of the horsemen, struggling with them until drawn more than two hundred paces from the wall.

In this way, they fought backwards and forwards, without cessation, for three hours; the Spaniards always standing by each other, and keeping their front to the enemy, in which alone consisted their safety, being so few in number. They found, however, that they suffered too severely when near the village, from the missiles launched from the wall,

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and that their best chance was in the open fields where they had room to manage their horses and wield their lances.

Throughout all these attacks and defences, the bold Captain Baltazar de Gallegos, the same who had struck the first blow in the battle, was ever in the front rank, and the fiercest of the fight. His perilous deeds were anxiously watched from afar, by his brother, Fray Juan de Gallegos, a worthy Dominican friar. Mounted on horseback, in his friar's dress, with a broad clerical hat on his head, he hovered about the skirts of the battle, spurring after the squadron in its attacks, and wheeling round and galloping off like mad in its retreats. The worthy friar was not a fighting man; his only object was to call his brother out of the affray, and mount him on the horse which he bestrode, that he might fight with more effect and less danger.

The bold Baltazar, however, heeded not his calls; he felt that his honour would not permit him to leave his post, so he kept on fighting on foot. At length, the peculiar dress of the friar, and his loud and repeated calls to his brother, attracted the notice of the enemy, who probably supposed him some chieftain encouraging his soldiers to fight hardily. Accordingly, in one of the retreats, as the friar's broad back was turned upon the foe, and he was

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galloping off at full speed, an Indian warrior sped a shaft with so true an aim, that, though at a distance, it struck him between the shoulders. Fortunately, he was protected by the two hoods of his friar's dress, which lay in thick folds upon his back; his broad hat also, which was secured by a cord under his chin, had fallen back in his flight, and hung like a shield upon his shoulders; the arrow, therefore, met with so much resistance as to make but a slight wound. It dampened, however, the paternal zeal of the friar, who from that time kept himself at a wary distance from the battle.

A harder fate befel the brave Don Carlos Enriquez; a youthful cavalier who had married a niece of the Adelantado, and was beloved by the whole army, for his urbanity and his virtues. From the commencement of the battle he had fought valiantly, and was conspicuous in every assault. In the last charge, his horse was wounded in the breast by an arrow, which remained buried in the flesh. As soon as the squadron had retreated, Don Carlos endeavoured to draw forth the arrow. Passing his lance from his right to his left hand, he leaned forward, and stooping over the neck of his horse, seized the dart, and endeavoured to pull it forth. In his exertion, he leaned his head on one side so as to expose his neck, the only part of his person unpro-

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tected by armour. In an instant, an arrow tipped with flint, came with the swiftness of lightning, buried itself in his throat, and the poor youth fell from his horse mortally wounded, though he did not expire until the following day.

The Spaniards suffered severely in these repeated conflicts; but their loss was nothing in comparison with that of the Indians, who had no defensive armour, and on whom every blow was effective. Seeing the advantage that the horses gave the Spaniards in the open field, the Indians now shut themselves up within the village, closing the gates and manning the ramparts.

Upon this, the Governor ordered the cavalry, being the best armed, to dismount, and taking bucklers for their defence, and battle axes in their hands, to break open the gates, and strive to take the village by storm.

In an instant, a band of two hundred resolute cavaliers dashed forward to the assault. The Indians received them valiantly, and beat them back several times. The gate, however, was soon broken open by repeated blows, and they rushed in, pell mell, amidst a shower of darts and stones. The gate being too narrow to admit them all readily, others attacked the wall with their axes; demolished the facing of clay and straw, and, laying bare the cross

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beams and their fastenings, aided each other to scramble up by them, and thus got into the village to the succour of their comrades.

The Indians fought desperately, both in the streets and from the tops of the houses. The Spaniards, galled by the missiles from the latter, and fearful that the enemy would retake the houses already gained, set fire to them. As they were of reeds and other combustible materials, they were soon wrapped in flames and smoke, adding to the horror of the scene.

While this conflict was raging in one part of the village, a kind of siege was going on in another. The Indians, the moment they had closed their gates, had turned their attention to the large house in the square, which had been assigned for the use of the Governor's retinue, and in which all his camp equipage was deposited. They had not assailed it before, as they thought it perfectly in their power, and they now repaired to it merely to share the spoils. To their surprise, they found it strongly defended. Within were three cross-bow men and five halberdiers of the Governor's guard, who usually accompanied his camp equipage, and an Indian, armed with bow and arrows, who had been made prisoner by the Spaniards on their first landing, and had ever since proved faithful to them. Beside these fighting

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men, there were a priest and a friar, and two slaves belonging to the Governor. One and all defended the house stoutly; the laymen with their weapons, the priests fervent in their devotions. The Indians tried in vain to gain the portal. They then mounted on the roof, and broke it open in three or four places; but so well did the cross-bow men and the Indian ply their weapons, that scarce did an enemy show himself at one of the openings, but he was transfixed by an arrow.

Thus did this little garrison maintain a desperate and almost hopeless defence, until De Soto and his bands, having fought their way into the village, as has been mentioned, arrived at the door of the dwelling, and dispersed its assailants. The fighting part of the garrison mingled with their comrades and pursued the strife; the clerical part took refuge in the fields, where they could carry on their spiritual warfare with equal vigour and more security.

The wild and mingled affray had now lasted four hours, but nothing could quell the fury of the Indians, who disdained to yield or ask quarter. Many of the Spaniards, exhausted by the fierce strife, fainting and choaked with thirst, ran to a pool of water, which was now crimsoned with the blood of the dead and dying, and having refreshed

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themselves, hastened back and rushed again into the battle.*

De Soto had hitherto fought on foot, but, as usual, waxing hot with action, he hastened out of the village, seized a horse, sprang into the saddle, and, followed by the brave Nuño Tobar, galloped back into the square, lance in hand, with the battle cry of Our Lady and Santiago! Calling out to the Spaniards to make way for him, he dashed among the thickest of the enemy; Tobar followed close after him. They spurred their chargers up and down, through the multitude in the square and the principal street; trampling down some, lancing others to the right and left, leaving a track of carnage wherever they passed.

In this wild melée, as the Governor rose in his stirrups to lance an Indian, another, who was behind, aimed at the part exposed between the saddle and the cuirass, and buried an arrow in his thigh. De Soto had no time in the confusion of the combat, to extract the arrow, which remained rankling in the wound for several hours, during which time, though unable to sit in his saddle, he continued fighting on horseback; a proof, says the Inca Garcilaso, not merely of his valour, but of his good horsemanship.

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 19.

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In the mean time, the fire was raging through the village, and made horrible ravages among the Indians. Those who were within doors, were consumed by the flames or stifled by the smoke: those who were fighting from the roofs, were either cut off by the fire, or obliged to throw themselves below. Many females perished in their dwellings.

At one time, the wind swept the flames and smoke along the street, upon the Indians; and while thus blinded and bewildered, the Spaniards charged upon them and drove them back; but the wind veering, favoured them in turn, and they regained all the ground they had lost.

Maddened at seeing their ranks thinned and their warriors lying slaughtered in heaps, the Indians now called upon their women to seize the weapons of the slain and revenge their death. Many had already been fighting by the side of their husbands, but on this appeal, every one rushed into the conflict. Some armed themselves with the swords, lances and partisans lost by the soldiery, and thus wounded them with their own weapons; others seized bows and arrows, which they plied with almost equal strength and skill with their husbands. In their fury, they threw themselves before the men, and even rushed upon the weapons of their enemies; for the courage of woman, when once roused, is fierce and

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desperate, and her spirit more reckless and vehement than that of man. The Spaniards, however, had consideration for their sex, and pity for their despair, and abstained from slaying or wounding them.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Fall of Tuscaloosa.

1540. While the battle was thus raging at Mauvila, Luis de Moscoso, the master of the camp, was loitering by the way with his forces. Instead of following speedily after the van-guard led by the Governor, he had sallied forth late from his encampment, and permitted his people to scatter themselves about the fields, hunting and amusing themselves. So long a time had elapsed since they had experienced any hostility from the natives, that they had lost all fear and precaution.

In this way, they straggled negligently and tardily forward, unsuspicious of any danger. At length, those in front, heard the distant alarums of drum and trumpet, mingled with the yells and shouts of the combatants, and beheld a column of smoke rising in the air. Suspecting the cause, they passed back the alarm, from mouth to mouth, of those who were behind, and pressed forward with all speed to the scene of action. It was late in the afternoon before they reached it.

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Among the foremost that arrived before the village, was the gallant Diego de Soto, nephew to the Governor. Learning the fate of his cousin Don Carlos Enriquez, to whom he was tenderly attached, he vowed to revenge his death. Throwing himself from his horse, and seizing a buckler, he rushed into the village, sword in hand, and plunged into the thickest of the fight. Scarce, however, had he entered, when an arrow pierced his eye and came out at the back of his head. He fell to the earth, never uttered another word, and died the following day in great agony. His death added to the affliction which the army felt for that of his brave cousin. The two young friends and relatives were thus united in death. They were generous spirits, worthy of each others' affection, and worthy nephews to such an uncle.

In the mean time, the rear-guard, as it arrived at the village, found great numbers of the Indians fighting in the adjacent fields, where the ground had been cleared and prepared for action. They assailed them vigorously, and had a long and obstinate combat; for many of the savage warriors had clambered over the walls, and swarmed into the field. At length the Indians were routed; many were pursued and cut to pieces by the horsemen, and but few escaped.

It was now near the hour of sunset, yet still the

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shouts and battle cries of the combatants arose from the burning village. As yet, from the want of space, no horsemen had fought within the place, except De Soto and Nuño Tobar; but now a great number of the cavalry dashed in at the gate, scattering themselves through the streets, dispersing and killing all the Indians they encountered.

Ten or twelve of the cavaliers spurred up the main street, where the battle was hottest, and coming upon the rear of a throng of Indians, male and female, who were fighting with the fury of demons, they broke through them with such impetuosity, as not merely to overturn them, but also several of the Spaniards with whom they were contending. The carnage was horrible, for the savages refused to surrender or to lay down their arms, but fought to the last gasp, until all were slain.

Here ended this bloody struggle, which had lasted for nine hours. The village remained a smoking ruin, covered with the slain, and victory declared for the Spaniards, just as the sun went down. The last Indian warrior that wielded a weapon, was one of those fighting in the village. So blinded was he by fury, that he was unconscious of the fate of his comrades, until glancing his eye around, he saw them all lying dead. Seeing further contest hopeless, he turned to fly, and reaching the wall, sprang

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lightly to the top, thinking to escape into the fields. Here, however, to his dismay, he beheld squadrons of horse and foot below him, and the field covered with his slaughtered countrymen. Escape was impossible; death or slavery awaited him from the hands of his enemy. In his despair, he snatched the string from his bow, passed it round his neck, and fastening the other end to a branch of one of the trees that rose out of the rampart, he threw himself from the wall and was strangled before the Spaniards had time to prevent it.

Such was the deadly battle of Mauvila, one of the most sanguinary, considering the number of the combatants, that had occurred among the discoverers of the new world. Forty-two Spaniards fell in the conflict; eighteen of them received their fatal wounds either in the eyes or the mouth, for the Indians, finding their bodies cased in armour, aimed at their faces. Scarce one of the Spaniards but was more or less wounded, some of them in many places. Thirteen died before their wounds could be dressed, and twenty-two afterwards, so that in all eighty-two were slain. To this loss must be added, that of forty-two horses killed by the Indians, and mourned by the Spaniards as if they had been so many fellow-soldiers.

As to the havoc among the Indians, it was almost

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incredible. Several thousand are said to have perished by fire and sword. The plain around the village was strewn with more than twenty-five hundred bodies. Within the walls, the streets were blocked up by the dead. A great number were consumed in the houses. In one building alone a thousand perished; the flames having entered by the door and prevented their escape, so that all were either burnt or suffocated: the greater part of these were females.

Among the dead which strewed the field without the walls, was found the body of Tuscaloosa the younger. As to the Cacique himself, his fate was never satisfactorily ascertained. According to the Portuguese Narrator, several Indian prisoners affirmed, that on the grand assault of the village by De Soto and his horsemen, the warriors of Tuscaloosa entreated him to withdraw from the village, and put his person in safety, in order that, should they all perish in battle, as they all had resolved to do, rather than turn their backs, he might survive to govern the country. The proud Cacique at first resisted their entreaties, but at length yielded to their urgent supplications, and fled from the ill-fated town, accompanied by a small band of Indians, carrying with him his scarlet mantle and the choicest things he could find among the Spanish baggage. According to the Inca, however, the account generally be-

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lieved by the Spaniards was, that he had perished in the flames; and this, in fact, comports most with his haughty, brave and patriotic spirit, which would scarcely permit him to survive so ruinous a defeat, and turn his back upon his town and people, in the moment of their most imminent peril. He was evidently one of the bravest as well as proudest and most potent of the native princes. His name still remains in the land which he loved so well, and defended so desperately; and it is a name which deserves to be held in reverence, as that of a hero, and a patriot.

Note.—The Inca and the Portuguese Narrator differ widely in their estimate of the killed and wounded in the action. Garcilaso de la Vega states the loss of the Spaniards to have been eighty-two, and of the Indians above eleven thousand. The Portuguese Narrator states the Spanish loss to have been eighteen killed and one hundred and fifty wounded, and of the Indians twenty-five hundred slain; which is the number stated by the Inca to have been killed in the battle outside of the town. The statement of the Inca is given more in detail, and apparently with a more intimate knowledge of facts; having the statements of three several eye witnesses, from which to make up his account. That of the Portuguese is rather vague and general. The estimate of the Inca may be somewhat exaggerated; yet it must be taken into consideration, that the Mauvilians were a numerous and powerful tribe, and were joined in this battle by the warriors of the neighbouring provinces. Their number must consequently have been very great. It is stated by both nar-

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CHAPTER IX.

The plight of the Spaniards after the battle of Mauvila.

1540. The situation of the Spaniards after the battle was truly deplorable. Most of them were severely wounded; all were exhausted by fatigue and hunger. The village was reduced to ashes around them, and all the baggage of the army, with its supplies of food and medicine, had been consumed in the houses.

The first care of the Governor, though badly wounded himself, was for his troops. Having ordered that the dead should be collected together, to be decently interred on the following day, he directed that relief should be administered to the wounded. Here, however, was the difficulty. There was but one surgeon in the army, and he was slow and unskilful. There were at least seventeen hun-

rators, that they all fought to the last gasp, so that the slaughter must have been immense. In so desperate and protracted a conflict, the number of eighty-two slain on the part of the Spaniards, appears much more probable than that of eighteen.

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dred grievous wounds, requiring a surgeon's care; several having fallen to the share of a single soldier. The mere flesh wounds were left for the patient himself to cure; but those in the joints, and other critical parts, which threatened to maim or disable the patient, required great attention. Unfortunately, they had neither ointments nor medicines of any kind, nor linen for bandages; all had been consumed. Not even shelter from the cold and dew of the night was to be found; for, not a house of the village remained standing. At length, boughs and branches were brought from the cabins that had been erected without the village, and sheds were put up against such of the walls as were still standing, under which the wounded were conveyed for shelter, and straw spread for their reception. Those who were least harmed, exerted themselves to succour their suffering companions. Some opened the bodies of the dead Indians, and took their fat for ointment; others took off their own shirts, and those of their slaughtered comrades, to make bandages for the disabled. As these were of linen, they were allotted to the severest wounds; for those which were not so grievous, they made use of their doublets, and the lining of their hose, or other materials of a coarser kind.

Others flayed and cut up the horses, preserving

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their flesh for the sustenance of the wounded. With all their zeal and exertions, however, a number died miserably, before any relief could be administered to them. Thus passed that wretched night, amid bitter lamentations and dying groans. Those who were able to bear arms, patrolled as sentinels, and maintained a vigilant watch, expecting to be assailed.

Eight days did the wounded Spaniards remain in these miserable shelters within the village: when able, at length, to go forth, they removed to the cabins which the Indians had erected without the walls, where they were more comfortably quartered. Here fifteen days more were passed. In the mean time, those who were least disabled, sallied forth on foraging expeditions, about the country, for four leagues in circuit, and found supplies of provisions in the numerous deserted hamlets scattered around.

In every thicket and ravine they found dead or dying Indians, who had not been able to reach their homes. Many, also, had taken shelter in the hamlets, and lay there, apparently without any one to minister to them. It was understood, however, that their friends came with nourishment to them in the night, but returned to their retreats in the forests before the dawn of day. The Spaniards

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treated these poor savages with kindness, sharing their food among them.

The troopers, in their foray into the forests, captured fifteen or twenty of the natives. On being asked whether their people were meditating another attack, they replied that their bravest warriors had fallen in the battle, and none were left to make a head of war. Their information appeared to be the truth; for, during all the time that the Spaniards remained in their encampment, no Indian ventured nigh them.

From the prisoners thus taken, and others captured in the village, they enquired, concerning the past stratagems and designs of Tuscaloosa, which had wrought such mischief.

That fierce and warlike chieftain, from the time he first heard of the approach of the Spaniards towards his dominions, had meditated their destruction. With that object, he had sent his son, with a train of warriors, to watch their movements; and had enlisted the natives of the contiguous provinces in his plot, promising to share with them the spoils of the Spaniards.

The women, too, most of whom had accompanied their husbands and lovers from the neighbouring provinces, declared they had been enticed to Mauvila, by promises of rich robes of scarlet cloth,

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and silks, and linen, and velvet, with which to decorate themselves for their dances; they were to have had horses, upon which to ride in triumph, and Spaniards given to them as slaves. Others came to be present at a great feast and rejoicing they were to hold after their victory; and others again, to witness the prowess and exploits of their lovers.

Tuscaloosa, on arriving at the village with the Adelantado, had held a council of war with his principal warriors, wherein it was debated whether they should attack the van-guard which had arrived, or wait until they had the whole within their power. It is probable that the heat and impatience of the Indian General caused the plot to explode before the appointed time.

It has been shown, that in the burning of the village, the Spaniards lost all their baggage and private effects. What gave them the greatest concern, however, was the loss of a little portion of wine and of wheaten flour, which they had carefully treasured up for the performance of the mass. All the sacerdotal dresses, also the chalices, and other articles of worship were destroyed; but the loss of the wheaten flour was irreparable. Consultations were held between the ecclesiastics and the laymen, whether bread made of maize might not be adopted, in case of extremity; but it was

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decided, that the use of any thing but wheat was contrary to the canons of the church.

From thence forward, therefore, on Sundays and Saints' days, they prepared an altar, and the priest officiated, arrayed in robes of dressed deer-skins, fashioned in imitation of his sacerdotal dresses; and they performed all parts of the ceremony, excepting the consecration of the bread and wine. This constituted what the Spaniards called "a dry mass."

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CHAPTER X.

De Soto becomes an altered man, and why.

1540. While at the village of Mauvila, overwhelmed with care and anxiety, the Governor was unexpectedly cheered by tidings, that ships with white men in them had arrived on the sea coast, toward which he was shaping his course. A rumour of this kind he had heard before the battle, and it was confirmed by some of the prisoners taken in the village. He further learnt from them that the port or bay of Achusi, where he had directed Gomez Arias and Diego Maldonado to rendezvous with their ships, was not more than seven days' journey distant.* He doubted not, therefore, that the ships in question were commanded by those officers, and brought reinforcements and supplies from Spain, for his projected settlement. He now considered himself on the eve of accomplishing all his wishes; of founding that colony which would assure the possession of the country he had explored, and enable him to pursue to advantage his search for gold.

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 19. The Inca states the distance as about thirty leagues.

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He had brought with him thus far, the Cacique, made prisoner by Maldonado, at the port of Achusi. He had always treated him with kindness, but had not sent him to his home before because of the distance, and the danger he would run of being killed or captured by the way. Learning, however, that the road was now secure, he granted him permission to return; at the same time, earnestly charging him to preserve the friendship of the Spaniards, who would soon be guests in his country. The Cacique departed, with expressions of gratitude for the kindness he had experienced, and assurances to the Governor, that he would be happy to welcome him to his territory.

The ships, which De Soto regarded as the means of conquest and colonization, many of his followers only looked forward to as means of escape out of a disastrous country. Some of them had been engaged in the Conquest of Peru, and contrasted the wealth of that golden empire with the poverty of the land through which they had struggled, where neither gold nor silver was to be found; and they did not fail to dwell upon this contrast when conversing with their companions. The Spaniards, generally, were disheartened by the disasters of the recent battle, and the implacable fierceness displayed by the natives. They saw that such a peo-

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ple were not easily to be subjugated. Instead, therefore, of wearing themselves out in this fated land, it seemed better to seek others already conquered, and abounding with wealth, as Mexico and Peru, where they might enrich themselves with less risk and toil. For these reasons, they determined, on reaching the sea shore, to abandon this disastrous country, and seek their fortunes in New Spain.

Secret information of these rumours was brought to De Soto, by some of his most devoted followers. He could scarcely credit it, and went round the camp at night, alone and in disguise, to ascertain the truth. In this way, he overheard a conversation in the hut of Juan Gaytan, the treasurer, in which that cavalier and several of his comrades expressed their determination to abandon the enterprise, and sail for Mexico or Peru, or return to Spain in the ships at Achusi.

De Soto stood aghast at hearing these resolves. He saw that his present force would disband the moment his followers could shift for themselves; while he was aware that it would be impossible for him to raise a new army. He had no booty of gold and silver to display, with which to tempt new adventurers; and, as to the specimens of pearls which he had intended to send to Cuba, they were all lost in the conflagration of Mauvila. Should his pre-

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sent forces desert him, therefore, he would remain stripped of dignity and command, blasted in reputation, his fortune expended in vain, and his enterprise, which had cost so much toil and trouble, a subject of scoffing, rather than renown. The Governor was a man extremely jealous of his honour; and as he reflected upon these gloomy prospects, they produced sudden and desperate resolves. He disguised his anger, and his knowledge of the schemes he had overheard; but he determined to frustrate them, by turning his back upon the coast, striking again into the interior, and never seeking the ships, nor furnishing any tidings of himself, until he had crowned his enterprise gloriously, by discovering new regions of wealth, like those of Peru and Mexico.*

A change came over De Soto from this day. He was disconcerted in his favourite scheme of colonization, and had lost confidence in his followers. Instead of manifesting his usual frankness, energy and alacrity, he became a moody, irritable, discontented man. He no longer pretended to strike out any grand undertaking; but stung with secret disappointment, went recklessly wandering from place to place, apparently without order or object, as if careless of time and life, and only anxious to finish his existence.

* Garcilaso de la Vega, L. 3, c. 22. Portuguese Relation.

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CHAPTER XI.

The Adelantado breaks up his encampment at Mauvila. Manner of crossing a river. The pass stoutly defended by the Indians.

1540. It was on Sunday the 18th of November, that De Soto, finding his troops sufficiently recovered from their wounds to bear the march, broke up his encampment at Mauvila and turned his face to the northward, to penetrate provinces which he had not yet visited. His feelings and motives for thus turning his back upon the sea coast he kept to himself; he was always a man strict and peremptory in exacting military obedience, and if his troops murmured among themselves at the route he chose, it is probable they were overawed and reduced to tacit obedience, by the increased sternness of his manner.

The soldiers were provided with two days provisions of maize, yet they were five days traversing a pleasant though uninhabited country, until they entered the province of Chicaza.* The first village

* The Portuguese Narrator says they entered into the Province of Pafallaya.

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at which they arrived, was called Cabusto. It was the principal one of the province, and was seated on a river, wide and deep, with high banks.*

The Governor, as usual, sent proffers of peace to the inhabitants, but they were rejected with scorn. "War is what we want," was the reply, "a war of fire and blood." Approaching the village, the Spaniards saw drawn out before it, more than fifteen hundred warriors. These skirmished with them for a time, but overpowered by the fury of their attack, fled to the river; some sprang into canoes, others plunged into the water, and thus they soon crossed to the opposite bank, where their main force, to the number of eight thousand warriors, was posted to dispute the passage.

The Spaniards found the village perfectly stripped and abandoned; for the inhabitants had sent off all their effects, with their wives and children, and prepared for war. They had determined to risk no open battle, but to dispute the pass of the river, which, on account of its depth and its high banks, they could easily do. For this purpose they had stretched their forces for two leagues along the opposite bank, and hoped to compel the army to take a different route.

When night closed in, the Indians annoyed the

* Supposed to be the Black Warrior, or Tuscaloosa river.

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Spaniards greatly, by sudden attacks and frequent alarms. They would cross the river in their canoes at different places, and then, uniting in a band, attack the camp. The Spaniards made use of stratagem in their defence. There were three landing places where the Indians disembarked. Here they dug pits, in which the archers and arquebusiers concealed themselves. As soon as they saw the Indians leap on shore and leave their canoes, they would rush out, sword in hand, and cut off their retreat. Three several times did they maltreat them in this manner, after which the Indians adventured not again to attempt to land; but contented themselves with vigilantly guarding the passage of the river.

The Governor now ordered one hundred of the most skilful men, to build two large boats or piraguas, nearly flat, and very spacious. That the Indians might not perceive their operations, he directed them to be built in a forest, which was a league and a half up the river, and about a league from its banks.

So assiduous were the workmen, that in twelve days the piraguas were finished. To transport them to the river, two carriages were constructed, on which they were drawn by mules and horses, and pushed forward by men, and in the most difficult places, carried on their shoulders. In this way

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one morning before daybreak, they were conveyed to the river and launched, where there were convenient landingplaces on either bank.

De Soto, who was present at the launching of the boats, ordered ten horse and forty infantry to embark in each, and hasten to cross before the Indians should gather to oppose them. The infantry were to row, and the horsemen to keep their saddles, not to lose time in mounting when they should reach the opposite shore.

Notwithstanding, however, the silence observed by the Spaniards in launching their boats, they were discovered by a band of about five hundred savages, who occupied the opposite bank. These gave a loud yell to spread the alarm, and rushed down to dispute the landingplace.

The Spaniards, fearing the enemy might gather in greater numbers, hurried to embark. De Soto would have gone in the first boat, but his followers prevented his exposing himself to this unnecessary hazard.

Those in the first bark, bent to their oars and quickly attained the opposite bank, amid a shower of arrows, by which every Spaniard was more or less wounded. The first horseman who leaped on shore was Diego Garcia, and close behind him came Gonzalo Silvestre; together they charged

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upon the enemy, drove them in, and pursued them for more than two hundred paces. Fearing to be surrounded, they then turned their reins, and spurred back to their companions. In this manner, now charging, now retreating, these hardy cavaliers fought alone, for a short time; in the fifth charge, however, they were joined by some horsemen, and were enabled to keep the Indians in check.

The infantry, the moment they landed, made for the shelter of a hamlet, hard by, and dared not to sally out, as their number was very small, and every soldier more or less hurt. The second bark in the mean time, in which was De Soto, was carried down the current. The troops attempted to land, but found it impracticable on account of the high, steep banks; they were, therefore, compelled to pull up the stream, with great labour, to the landing place; which by this time was cleared of the enemy. De Soto, with seventy or eighty Spaniards at his back, leaped on shore and hastened to the relief of those who were battling in the plain.

On their approach, the Indians retreated, and seeing the Spaniards had effected a landing, they collected their forces, and fortified themselves with palisades, in a swamp covered with reeds, from whence they made frequent sallies; but were as

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often driven back, and lanced by the cavalry. Thus the day passed in unimportant skirmishes, the troops crossed the river without molestation, and at night-fall every Indian vanished.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega. lib. 3, c. 35. Portuguese Narrative, c. 20.

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CHAPTER XII.

De Soto sends a messenger to the natives with offers of peace. His treatment. Encamp in a Chickasaw village. Two soldiers condemned to death.

1540. THE country in the neighbourhood of the river was level and fertile, with small scattered hamlets, in which the army found quantities of maize and dried pulse. Having broken up the piraguas for the sake of the nails, they resumed their march, and after travelling five days through a desert country, came to another river,* where the Indians were collected together to dispute the passage. Unwilling to expose his men to further loss, De Soto halted for two days, until a canoe had been constructed, in which he sent over an Indian messenger to the Cacique, with offers of peace and friendship. The savages seized the messenger, massacred him on the banks of the river, in sight of the Spaniards, and then, as if satisfied with this insulting sacrifice, dispersed with horrid yells.†

* Supposed to be the Tombigbe.

† Portuguese Relation, c. 20.

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There being no longer any enemy to oppose his passage, De Soto conducted his troops across the stream, and then marched onward, until, on the 18th of December, he arrived at the village of Chicaza, from which the province took its name.* It stood upon a gentle hill, stretching from north to south, watered on each side by a small stream, bordered by groves of walnut and oak trees.

The weather was now severe, with snow and ice, and the troops suffered extremely in their encampments. The Governor, therefore, determined to take up his winter quarters at Chicaza. For this purpose, he ordered wood and straw to be brought from the neighbouring hamlets, wherewith to construct houses; for, notwithstanding there were two hundred in the village, they were too small to shelter the army.

* Considering the nature of the country through which they passed, agreeing with the modern accounts of that region, the direction of the march, the time, and the distance, it is very evident that this was the country of the Chickasaws, in the upper part of the state of Mississippi; and this village probably stood on the western bank of the Yazoo, a branch of the Mississippi, about eighty leagues to the northwest of Mobile. Charlevoix remarks, "Garcilasode la Vega parle des Chicachas dans son Histoire de la Conqueste de la Floride, et il les place à peu près au même endroit, ou ils sont encore presentement."—Vide Charlevoix, Jour. Hist. Let. 29, p. 408.—Belknap's Am. Biography, v. 1. p. 191.—Flint's Geog. and Hist. of the Mississippi, v. 1. p. 497.

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Nearly two months the Spaniards remained in this encampment, enjoying some quietude and repose. The cavalry daily scoured the fields, and captured the Indians, whom the Governor sent to the Cacique with presents and offers of peace and friendship. The Cacique made favourable replies, promising, from day to day, to visit the camp, but as often excusing his delay, and sending presents of fruits, fish and venison. De Soto gave the principal warriors of this chieftain a feast, at which was served up some pork, which the Indians had never before tasted, and so palatable and delicious did they find it, that from this time they would prowl about the encampment every night, to steal and kill the swine. Two Indians, who were caught in the act, were shot to death, by order of the Governor, and a third had his hands cut off, and was sent to his Cacique as an example and warning to the other Indians.

About this time, four soldiers repaired to the dwelling of the Cacique, about a league from the camp, without the permission of the Governor, and carried off by force some skins and mantles, which so enraged the Indians, that many of them abandoned their homes. When De Soto heard of this violence, he had them all arrested; condemned the two ringleaders, Francisco Osorio and one Fuentez, to death, and confiscated the goods of all the four culprits.

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The priests and officers of the army supplicated the General to mitigate the sentence, and begged the life of Francisco Osorio. De Soto, however, was inflexible. The unfortunate criminals were led forth into the public square to be beheaded. At this moment a party of Indians arrived, being sent by the Cacique, to make his complaints. This event, which seemed calculated to hasten the death of the Spaniards, was the means of their salvation. Juan Ortiz, the interpreter, instigated by Baltazar de Gallegos, and other officers of rank, cunningly gave a false interpretation of the complaints of the indignant chieftain. He told the Governor that the Cacique had sent these Indians to say, that the soldiers were not guilty, and had in no wise offended him, and that he would consider it as a great favour if they were pardoned and set at liberty. Upon this, the Governor pardoned the criminals.* On the other hand, Ortiz assured the Indians, that the soldiers who had injured them were in prison, and that the Governor would punish them in such an exemplary manner, as to serve as an example to all others.

In the mean time, the subjects of this Cacique, kept up constant alarms at night, as if about to assail the village; but the moment the soldiers sallied out, they would take to flight. The Governor sus-

* Portuguese Narration, c. 20.

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pected, however, that these were but sham attacks, intended to render his sentinels careless and off their guard, when a real attack should be made. He exhorted his camp-master Luis de Moscoso, therefore, to be unceasing in his vigilance, and to maintain a strict watch upon the camp at night. His suspicions and expectations were correct, though unfortunately they were but little heeded.

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CHAPTER XIII.

The desperate battle of Chicaza.

1541. A DARK and cloudy night, when a north wind was blowing furiously, was chosen by the Cacique for a grand assault upon the village. Dividing his forces into three bands, to make the attack at three several places, he led on the centre one in person, and approached in the dead of night, with such silence, as to arrive within a hundred paces of the sentinels, without being perceived. Having learnt by his scouts, that the two other bands were equally advanced, he gave the signal of attack.

Immediately the air resounded with the blasts of conch shells, the rumbling of wooden drums, and the yells and war whoops of the savages, who rushed like demons to the assault. Many had lighted matches, like cords, made of a vegetable substance, which, whirled in the air, would blaze up into a flame; others had arrows tipped with the same. These they hurled upon the houses, which being of reeds and straw, instantly took fire, and, the wind blowing strongly, were soon wrapped in flames.

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The Spaniards, although surprised by this sudden and furious assault, rushed out to defend themselves. De Soto, who always slept in his doublet and hose, that he might be prepared for such emergencies, clasped on his casque, drew on a surcoat of quilted cotton, three fingers in thickness, the best defence against the arrows of the savages, and seizing buckler and lance, mounted his horse, and dashed fearlessly into the midst of the enemy. Ten or twelve horsemen followed him, though not immediately.

The soldiers in every direction started up, with their wonted spirit, to battle with the Indians; but they laboured under great disadvantages. The strong wind, which blew the flames and smoke directly in their faces, greatly disconcerted them. Some were obliged to crawl out of their quarters on all fours, to escape the raging flames; some, bewildered, fled from house to house; others rushed out into the plain; and some flew to rescue the sick and the wounded, who were in a dwelling apart. Before succour arrived, however, many of them had perished in the flames.

The cavalry had not time to arm themselves, or saddle their steeds. Some led their's forth, and hurried them from the flames; others, who had fastened up their horses with iron chains, on account of their being restive from high feeding, could not

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cast them loose in the hurry, and had to leave them to their fate, and fly for their own lives. A few, who were enabled to mount, galloped to the assistance of the Governor, who, with his scanty number of followers, had been battling for a long time with the enemy. The other two bands of Indians entered the village and attacked the Spaniards on each flank; and, aided by the fire and smoke, made great havock.

Forty or fifty of the soldiers who were at the eastern end of the village, where the flames and the battle raged most fiercely, fled into the fields. Nuño Tobar rushed after them, sword in hand, his coat of mail left unbuckled in the hurry. "Turn, soldiers! turn," cried he, "whither are you flying? Here is neither Cordova nor Seville to give you refuge. Your safety lies in your courage, and in the vigour of your arms; not in flight." At this moment thirty soldiers, from a part of the village which the flames had not reached, came up to intercept the fugitives. They taunted the recreant Spaniards with their shameful flight, and, inducing them to join forces, they hastened together to renew the combat.

At this time, Andres de Vasconcelos, with twenty-four chosen cavaliers of his company, all Portuguese hidalgos, most of whom had served as horsemen in

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the wars on the African frontier, charged on the main body of the enemy. He was accompanied by Nuño Tobar, on foot. The fury of their attack forced the savages to retire.

This timely reinforcement gave new courage to the handful of Spaniards, who, headed by the Governor, were fighting in that quarter. De Soto had marked an Indian warrior, who had fought with great fury and success. Closing in with him, he gave him a thrust of the lance; and charging upon him, and leaning with all his force upon the right stirrup to repeat the blow, the saddle, which had been left ungirt in the confusion of the assault, slipped off, and De Soto fell with it in the midst of the enemy. The Spaniards, seeing his peril, dashed in, horse and foot, to his rescue, and kept the Indians at bay, until he was extricated and his steed saddled, when vaulting upon his back, he pricked again into the fight.

The Indians, at length completely vanquished, fled from the field of battle. De Soto, with his troopers, pursued them as long as they could be distinguished by the light of the burning village; then ordering the recall to be sounded, he returned to ascertain his loss. He found it greater than he had imagined. Forty Spaniards had fallen in the combat. Among the dead was a Spanish

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woman, the wife of a worthy soldier, and the only female who had accompanied the army. Her husband had left her behind, when he rushed forth to fight. She had escaped from the house, but returned to save some pearls; the flames cut off her second retreat, and she was found afterwards, burnt to death.

Fifty horses, also, had perished, and many more were wounded. Above twenty of them had been either burnt or shot down with arrows, in the houses where their masters had been obliged to leave them tied up. The darts had been skilfully aimed at the most vital parts. One horse had two shafts through the heart, shot from opposite directions. Another horse, and one of the broadest and heaviest in the army, was shot by such a vigorous arm, that the arrow had passed through both shoulders, and four fingers' breadth beyond.

Another loss, which grieved the Spaniards, was that of the swine which they had brought with them, to stock their projected settlement. These had been shut up in an enclosure roofed with straw, and nearly all perished in the flames.

In examining the bodies of the Indians killed in the battle, the Spaniards found three cords wound round several of them. These, it is said, they had brought to secure their anticipated spoils; one be-

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ing intended to bind a Spanish captive, another to lead off a horse, and the third to tie up a hog. The story, however, savours strongly of camp gossip.

This disastrous battle, following on the ruinous one of Mauvila, increased the gloom and exasperation of spirit of De Soto. He made strict enquiry into the night attack, and the circumstances which had enabled the enemy to approach, undiscovered, and surprise them so fatally. All this he attributed to gross negligence, on the part of Luis de Moscoso, in respect to placing sentinels and going the rounds. He had probably been already provoked by the tardy arrival of Moscoso, on the fatal battle field of Mauvila; and now, in this additional cause of vexation, forgot his feelings of friendship to his old brother in arms. In his indignation, he deposed Moscoso from his post of master of the camp, and appointed in his place the bold Baltazar de Gallegos.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, lib. 3, c. 36, 37. Portuguese Narrative, c. 20.

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CHAPTER XIV.

The Spaniards remove to Chicacilla. Occurrences there. The exploit of Juan de Guzman. The invention of one of the soldiers as a protection against the cold.

1541. THREE days after the battle, the Spaniards shifted their encampment to a more advantageous position, about a league distant, which they called Chicacilla.* Here they set up a forge, and busied themselves in newly tempering their swords, injured by the fire, and in making saddles, and shields, and lances, to replace those which had been consumed.

In this village they sojourned the remainder of the winter, suffering grievously from the extreme cold. They were in wretched plight, having saved no clothing from the late battle, except what they chanced to have on their backs. When the savages learnt the extent of the havock they had made, their fierce spirits were aroused anew, and they hovered every night round the camp, making repeated assaults, and sounding a frequent alarms. The Span-

* That is, a Little Chicaza.

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iards, lest the Indians should fire the houses, as they had done those of Chicaza, remained all the night long without the village, arrayed in four different squadrons, with sentries posted. They were obliged to maintain a vigilant watch, for the savages burst upon them, at all hours. In these nocturnal skirmishes, many were killed and wounded on both sides.

Every morning, De Soto despatched four or five parties of horse, in different directions, to scour the country. They cut down every Indian they encountered, and always returned at sunset, with the assurance that there was not an Indian breathing within four leagues. In four or five hours afterwards, however, hordes of Indians would attack them. It seemed almost incredible that the savages could have assembled in so short a time.

One night a band of Indians approached warily, the place where Captain Juan de Guzman, with his company, were posted. De Guzman perceiving them by the light of the blazing faggots, sprang upon his horse, and followed by five horsemen and a few foot, charged down upon them. De Guzman, who was a cavalier of unflinching spirit, though of a delicate form, singled out an Indian in the van-guard, who carried a banner, and made a lunge at him with his lance. The Indian avoiding the blow,

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caught the lance with his right hand, wrested it from De Guzman, then seized him by the collar, and giving him a violent jerk, hurled him from the saddle to his feet; all this while holding the banner in his left hand.

The soldiers witnessing the imminent danger of their leader, rushed in, cut the Indian to pieces, and put the whole band of savages to rout. The troopers dashed after them in hot pursuit. The ground favoured the movements of the horse, and the Spaniards would have signally avenged their late disaster, had not their career been suddenly arrested by the cry of "to the camp! to the camp!" At this startling summons, they wheeled about and galloped back to the encampment, and thus the fugitives escaped. The alarm was raised by one of the monks, who was fearful that the troopers, in their vengeful pursuit, might fall into some ambush of the enemy. Forty Indians fell in this affray. The Spaniards lost two of their steeds, and two were wounded.

The army remained in this encampment until the end of March. Besides being unceasingly harassed by the enemy, they suffered bitterly from the cold, which was rigorous in the extreme; especially to men who had to pass every night under arms, with scarce any clothing.

In this extremity, however, they were relieved by

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the ingenuity of one of the common soldiers. He succeeded in making a matting, four fingers in thickness, of a long and soft kind of grass, or dried ivy one half of which served as a mattress, and the other half was turned over as a blanket. He likewise made many others for his companions, who all assisted him in the manufacture.

These rustic beds were brought every night to the main guard, and with their aid, those who were on duty, were enabled to endure the severe cold of the winter nights. The army also found abundant provisions of maize and dried fruits in the neighbourhood.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, Lib. 3. c. 39.—Portuguese Narrative, c. 21.

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CHAPTER XV.

Juan de Añasco, and a detachment of horse and foot, have a brush with the natives; and how he was taunted by them. Storming of the fortress of Alibamo. Challenge of an Indian warrior, and how he fared in consequence.

1541. On the first of April, the army broke up their encampment. They journeyed four leagues the first day, through a champaign country, thickly studded with small hamlets, and halted in a plain beyond the territory of Chicaza; vainly fancying that the Indians, now that they had left their province, would no longer molest them.

A strong party of horse and foot, commanded by Juan de Añasco, which was foraging for provisions, came in sight of an Indian fortress, garrisoned by a great body of savages, who looked like devils rather than men. Their bodies were painted in stripes, white, black, and red, as if clothed with fantastic garments. Their faces were blackened, and they had red circles round their eyes, which gave them a ferocious aspect; while some wore

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feathers upon their heads, and others horns. On seeing the Spaniards, they sallied forth, shouting and yelling, and beating wooden drums.

De Añasco retreated to an open field within a cross-bow shot of the fortress, and drew up his cross-bow men with their bucklers before the horses, to protect them. In this way, he received the light skirmishing assaults of the Indians. The latter, seeing the inferiority of the Spaniards, taunted them from a distance, by a singular piece of mummery. Having kindled a great fire in front of their fort, they pretended to knock one of their companions on the head with a club, and then swung him by the feet and shoulders, as if they would throw him into the flames: thereby giving the Spaniards to understand the treatment they were to expect. Juan de Añasco was of too irritable a temperament to bear such taunts patiently, but felt the insufficiency of his force to attack the fortress. He despatched, therefore, three troopers to the Governor, to entreat assistance.

Leaving one third of the infantry and cavalry to guard the camp, De Soto immediately marched out with the remainder, to the assault of the fort, which was called Alibamo.* This fortress was built in

* We give the name according to the Inca. The Portuguese Narrator calls it Alimamu.

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the form of a quadrangle, of strong palisades. The four sides were each four hundred paces in length. Within, the fort was traversed from side to side by two other palisades, dividing it into separate parts. In the outer wall were three portals, so low and narrow, that a man could not enter them mounted on horse. Passing through these, appeared the other wall, with three entrances, and behind that a third; so that if the outer wall were gained, the garrison could retreat to the second, and so on. In the last wall were three portals, opening upon a narrow and deep river, that flowed in the rear of the fort.* So high were the banks of this stream, that it was exceedingly difficult to clamber up them on foot, and they were inaccessible for horse. A few rude, dilapidated bridges, were thrown across the river, affording a difficult passage.

The Indians had constructed their fort in this manner, that the Spaniards might not avail themselves of their horses, but be obliged to battle with them foot to foot, when they fancied they were not only equal but even superior to their enemies.

De Soto, having carefully reconnoitred the fortress, ordered a hundred of the best armed horsemen to dismount, and, forming three squadrons, advance, three abreast, and commence the attack;

* Supposed to be the Yazoo river.

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whilst the foot, who were less completely cased in defensive armour, should support their rear; and, together, they should strive to seize the three entrances. The slight formed but brave Juan de Guzman led on one of the squadrons; Alonso Romo de Cardeñosa, another; and the stout Gonzalo Silvestre, the third.

The Indians, who had until this moment remained shut up in their fortress, perceiving the preparations of the Spaniards for the assault, sallied out to battle, a hundred men from each portal. At the first discharge, Diego de Castro, Luis Bravo, and Francisco de Figueroa, were brought to the ground, mortally wounded. All three were pierced in the thigh, with arrows barbed with flint; for, the savages having gained some experience during their warfare with the Spaniards, always aimed at the thigh, which was never guarded. The Spaniards, seeing their companions fall, shouted to one another to rush in, and leave the Indians no time to gall them with their arrows. They charged furiously, and drove the enemy before them, to the very portals of the fortress.

While Juan de Añasco and Andres de Vasconcelos attacked the savages on the flank, De Soto, with twenty horse, charged upon the other. As the Governor was spurring onward, an arrow struck

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him upon his casque, with such force, that it rebounded a pike's length in the air, and De Soto confessed afterwards that it made his eyes flash fire. Pressed by the united shock of horse and foot, the Indians made for the entrances of the fort, but these were so narrow, that a great number were slaughtered without the walls. The Spaniards rushed in, pell mell, with them.

The carnage within the fortress was dreadful. The Indians were crowded together, and the Spaniards, remembering the injuries they had received from them during the past winter, gave loose to their rage, and massacred them without mercy. As they wore no defensive armour, they were easily dispatched. Many trusting to their agility, leaped the wall into the plains, and falling into the hands of the soldiers, were instantly slain. Many escaped by the portals in the rear, to the bridges; but in their haste to cross, several were jostled into the river, which flowed at a great distance beneath. Others, pressed by the enemy, threw themselves from the banks and swam across. In a short time, the fortress was abandoned and in the power of the Spaniards; while those Indians who reached the opposite bank placed themselves in battle array.

One of the savages who had escaped, desirous of showing his skill with the bow and arrow, sepa-

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rated himself from his companions, and shouted to the Spaniards, giving them to understand, by signs and words, that he challenged any archer to come out and have a shot with him, to prove which man was the better marksman. Upon this, Juan de Salinas, a brave Asturian hidalgo, who, with some companions, had sheltered himself among trees from the arrows, stepped forth, and walking down to the bank of the river, took his stand opposite to the Indian. One of his companions called to him to wait, until he should come to guard him with his shield; but Salinas refused to take any advantage of his enemy. He placed an arrow in his cross-bow, while the Indian also selected one from his quiver, and both drew at the same moment.

The dart of Juan de Salinas took effect, and pierced the Indian's breast. He would have fallen, but was received in the arms of his companions, who bore him away, more dead than alive. The Indian's arrow pierced the Spaniard in the nape of the neck, and remained crossed in the wound. Salinas returned with it in this state to his comrades, well pleased with his success. The comrades of the fallen Indian allowed him to depart without molestation, as the challenge had been man to man.

The Adelantado, determined to punish the impudence and daring of these Indians, called on the

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cavalry to follow him; and, crossing the river by an easy ford above the fort, galloped out upon the plain; then, charging upon the savages, he pursued them for more than a league, with great slaughter; and had night not interposed, not one would have survived to tell the tale. As it was, the carnage was very great.

When the Spaniards gave up the pursuit, they returned to their encampment, and halted here four days, until the wounded were restored. Fifteen subsequently died. Of these were the three cavaliers who had fallen at the commencement of the battle. They were greatly lamented by their companions, for they were noble, young, and valiant; not one of them had reached his twenty-fifth year.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega. lib. 3, c. 35. Portuguese Narrative, c. 20.

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CHAPTER XVI.

The Spaniards come in sight of the Mississippi. The Cacique Chisca—his hostile movements.

1541. After four days the Spaniards departed from the encampment of Alibamo, still marching towards the north, to avoid the sea. For seven days they traversed an uninhabited country, full of forests and swamps, where they had sometimes to swim their horses.* At length they came in sight of a village, called Chisca, seated near a wide river. As this river was the largest they had discovered in Florida, they called it Rio Grande; it was the same now called the Mississippi.† The Indians of this province, owing to their unceasing warfare with the natives of Chicaza, and the country lying between

* Portuguese Relation, c. 22.

† The Inca, on the authority of Juan Coles, one of the followers of De Soto, says, that the Indian name of the river was Chucagua. The Portuguese Narrator says, that in one place it was called Tumaliseu; in another Tapata; in another Mico; and at that part where it enters into the sea Ri. It is probable it had different names among the different Indian tribes. The village of Chisca, is called Quizquiz, by the Portuguese Narrator.

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them being unpeopled, knew nothing of the approach of the strangers. The moment the Spaniards descried the village, they rushed into it, in a disorderly manner, took many Indians prisoners, of both sexes and of all ages, and pillaged the houses.

On a high artificial mound, on one side of the village, stood the dwelling of the Cacique, which served as a fortress. The only ascent to it was by two ladders. Many of the Indians took refuge there, whilst others fled to a dense wood, that arose between the village and the river. Chisca, the chieftain of the province, was very old, and lying ill in his bed. Hearing the tumult and shouts, however, he raised himself and went forth; and as he beheld the sacking of his village and the capture of his vassals, he seized a tomahawk and began to descend in a furious rage, threatening vengeance and extermination to all who had dared to enter his domains without permission. With all these bravadoes the Cacique, beside being infirm and exceedingly old, was pitiful in his dimensions; the most miserable little Indian that the Spaniards had seen in all their marchings. He was animated, however, by the remembrance of the deeds and exploits of his youth, for he had been a doughty warrior, and ruled over a vast province.

The women and attendants of the Cacique, sur-

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rounded him, and with tears and entreaties, prevailed upon him not to descend; at the same time, those who came up from the village informed him that the enemy were men, such as they had never before beheld or heard of, and that they came upon strange animals of great size and wonderful agility. "If you desire to battle with them," said they, "to avenge this injury, it will be better to summon together the warriors of the neighbourhood and await a more fitting opportunity. In the mean time, let us put on the semblance of friendship, and not by any inconsiderate rashness, provoke our destruction.' With these, and similar arguments, the women and attendants of the Cacique, prevented his sallying forth to battle. He continued, however, in great wrath, and when the Governor sent him a message, offering peace, he returned an answer, refusing all amity, and breathing fiery vengeance.

De Soto and his followers, wearied out with the harrassing warfare of the past winter, were very desirous of peace. Having pillaged the village and offended the Cacique, they were in something of a dilemma; accordingly, they sent him many gentle and most soothing messages. Added to their disinclination for war, they observed, that during the three hours they had halted in the village, nearly four thousand well armed warriors had rallied

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round the Cacique, and they feared, that if such a multitude could assemble in such a short time, there must be large reinforcements in reserve. They perceived, moreover, that the situation of the village was very advantageous for the Indians, and very unfavourable to them; for the plains around were covered with trees and intersected by numerous streams, which would impede the movements of the cavalry. But more than all this, they had learned from sad experience, that these incessant conflicts did not in the least profit them: day after day, man and horse were slain, and in the midst of a hostile country, and far from home or hope of succour, their number was gradually dwindling away.

The Indians held a council to discuss the messages of the strangers. Many were for war; they were enraged with the imprisonment of their wives and children, and the pillage of their property; to recover which, according to their fierce notions, the only recourse was arms. Others, who had not lost any thing, yet desired hostilities, from a natural inclination for fighting. They wished to exhibit their valour and prowess, and to try what kind of men these were, who carried such strange arms. The more pacific savages, however, advised that the proffered peace should be accepted, as the surest means of recovering their wives and children and effects;

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they added, that the enemy might burn their villages and lay waste their fields, at a time when their grain was almost ripening, and thus add to their calamities. The valour of these strangers, said they, is sufficiently evident; for men who have passed through so many enemies, cannot be otherwise than brave.

This latter counsel prevailed. The Cacique, dissembling his anger, replied to the envoy, that since the Spaniards entreated for peace, he would grant it, and allow them to halt in the village, and give them food, on condition that they would immediately free his subjects and restore their effects; not keeping a single article. He also stipulated that they should not mount to see him. If these terms were accepted, he said, he would be friendly; if not, he defied them to the combat.

The Spaniards readily agreed to these conditions; the prisoners and plunder were restored, and the Indians departed from the village, leaving food in the dwellings for the Spaniards, who sojourned here six days to tend the sick. On the last day, with the permission of the Cacique, De Soto visited him, and thanked him for his friendship and hospitality, and on the subsequent day they resumed their march.

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CHAPTER XVII.

The Spaniards prepare to cross the Mississippi. A Cacique, with a large fleet of canoes, comes to visit the Governor: the result of their interview. Passage of the Mississippi. Arrival among the Kaskaskias Indians.

1541. DEPARTING from Chisca, the army travelled by slow journeys of three leagues a day, on account of the wounded and sick. They followed up the windings of the river until the fourth day, when they came to an opening in the thickets. Heretofore, they had been threading a vast and dense forest, bordering the stream, whose banks were so high on both sides, that they could neither descend nor clamber up them. De Soto found it necessary to halt in this plain twenty days, to build boats or piraguas, to cross the river; for on the opposite bank, a great multitude of Indian warriors were assembled, well armed, and with a fleet of canoes to defend the passage.

The morning after the Governor had encamped, some of the natives visited him. Advancing, with-

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out speaking a word, and turning their faces to the east, they made a profound genuflexion to the sun; then facing to the west, they made the same obeisance to the moon, and concluded with a similar, but less humble reverence to De Soto. They said that they came in the name of the Cacique of the province, and in the name of all his subjects, to bid them welcome, and to offer their friendship and services; and added, that they were desirous of seeing what kind of men these strangers were, as there was a tradition handed down from their ancestors, that a white people would come and conquer their country.* The Adelantado said many kind things in reply, and dismissed them, well pleased with their courteous reception.

The Cacique sent him repeated messages of kindness, but never visited the encampment; excusing himself on account of ill health. His subjects aided the Spaniards with much cheerfulness; while the Indians from the opposite side of the river, harassed them continually; crossing over in their canoes, and launching arrows at them, while at work. The archers and cross-bow men, however, as on a former occasion, concealed themselves in pits, until the enemy drew nigh, then suddenly rising and firing upon them, they scattered them with great slaughter.

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 22.

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One day, while at work, they perceived a fleet of two hundred canoes, descending the river. They were filled with armed Indians, painted after their wild fashion, adorned with feathers of every colour, and carrying shields in their hands, made of the buffalo hide, wherewith some sheltered the rowers, while others stood in the prow and poop of the canoe with their bows and arrows. The canoes of the Cacique and chief warriors were decorated with fanciful awnings, under which they sat and gave their orders to those who rowed. "It was a pleasing sight," says the Portuguese Narrator, "to behold these wild savages in their canoes, which were neatly made and of great size, and with their awnings, coloured feathers and waving standards, appeared like a fleet of galleys."

They paddled to within a stone's throw of the shore, where the Governor was standing, surrounded by his officers. The Cacique addressed him, and professed that he came to offer his services and assure him of his obedience, as he had been informed that he was the most powerful prince of the whole earth. De Soto returned him thanks, and begged him to land, that they might converse more conveniently. The Cacique returned no answer, but sent three canoes on shore with presents of fruit, and bread made of the pulp of a certain kind of

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plum.* The Governor again importuned the savage to land, but perceiving him to hesitate, and suspecting a treacherous and hostile intent, marshalled his men in order of battle. Upon this, the Indians turned their prows and fled. The cross-bow men sent a flight of arrows after them, and killed five or six of their number. They retreated in good order, covering the rowers with their shields. Several times after this, they landed to attack the soldiers, as was supposed, but the moment the Spaniards charged upon them, they fled to their canoes.

At the end of twenty days, four piraguas were built and launched. About three hours before the dawn of day, De Soto ordered them to be manned, and four troopers of tried courage to go in each.

The rowers pulled strongly, and when they were within a stone's throw of the shore, the troopers dashed into the water, and meeting with no opposition from the enemy, they easily effected a landing, and made themselves masters of the pass. Two hours before the sun went down, the whole army had passed over the Mississippi.

The river in this place, says the Portuguese historian, was a half league from one shore to the other, so that a man standing still could scarce be discern-

* The persimmon. Loaves are still made of this wild fruit among the Indians and settlers of the West.

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ed from the opposite shore. It was of great depth, of wonderful rapidity, and very muddy; and was always filled with floating trees and timber, carried down by the force of the current.*

Breaking up the boats as before, to preserve the nails, they proceeded onward four days, through a wilderness, intersected in many places by morasses, which they were obliged to ford; and, on the fifth day, from the summit of a high ridge, they descried a large village, containing about four hundred dwellings. It was seated on the banks of a river, the borders of which, as far as the eye could reach, were covered with luxuriant fields of maize, interspersed with groves of fruit trees.† The natives, who had already received notice of their approach, thronged out in crowds to receive them, freely offering their houses and effects for their use.

Two Indian chiefs arrived in a short time, with a train of warriors, bearing a welcome from their Cacique, and an offer of his services. The Governor received them very courteously, and treated them with much kindness, so that they went away well pleased.

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 22. This place, where De Soto and his army crossed the Mississippi, was probably the lowest Chickasaw Bluff, one of the ancient crossing places, between the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth parallel of latitude.

† Probably the river St. Francis.

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The Spaniards finding abundance of food for man and horse, halted for six days in the village, which bore the name of Casquin or Casqui, as did the whole province and its Cacique.*

Resuming their journey, they marched through a populous and champaign country, where the land was more elevated and the soil less alluvial than any they had yet seen on the borders of the Mississippi. The fields were overflowingly fruitful; the pecan nut, the red and gray plum, and mulberry trees grew there in abundance.† In two days they came to the chief town, where the Cacique resided. It was seated on the same side of the river, about seven leagues above, and in a very fertile and populous country. Here they were well received by the Cacique, who made him a present of mantles,‡ skins and fish; and invited De Soto to lodge in his habitation. It stood on a high artificial hill one side

* Supposed to be the same as the Kaskaskias Indians, who, at that time, peopled a province south-west of the Missouri. Vide Nuttall's Arkansas, p. 82, 250, 251. Charlevoix, Journal Historique, v. 3. let. 28.

† Portuguese Narrative, c. 23. Supposed to be the country of the Little Prairie and that chain of high land extending to New Madrid; in the vicinity of which are to be seen many aboriginal remains. Vide Nuttall's Arkansas, p, 251.

‡ These mantles were fabricated from coarse threads of the bark of trees and nettles.

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of the village, and consisted of twelve or thirteen large houses for the accommodation of his numerous family of women and attendants. The Governor declined the invitation, for fear of incommoding him. A part of the army quartered in the houses, the remainder lodged in bowers, which the Indians quickly built of green branches, in groves close by. It was now the month of May, and as the weather was becoming oppressively warm, the tenants of these rustic bowers found them truly delightful.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

A religious ceremony on the banks of the Mississippi.

1541. The army remained tranquil in this village during three days, with much good feeling on both sides. On the morning of the fourth, the Cacique, accompanied by all his principal subjects, came into the presence of De Soto, and making a profound obeisance, "Señor," said he, "as you are superior to us in prowess, and surpass us in arms, we likewise believe that your God is better than our God! These you behold before you, are the chief warriors of my dominions. We supplicate you to pray to your God to send us rain, for our fields are parched for the want of water!"*

De Soto replied, that although he and all his followers were but sinners, yet they would supplicate God, the father of mercies, to show mercy unto them. In the presence of the Cacique, he then ordered his chief carpenter, Francisco the Genoese, to hew

* The Portuguese Narrator says, that the Cacique besought him to restore to sight two blind men he had brought with him.

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down the highest and largest pine tree in the vicinity, and construct of it a cross.

They immediately felled one, of such immense size, that a hundred men could not raise it from the ground. They formed of it a perfect cross, and erected it on a high hill, on the banks of the river, which served the Indians as a watch tower, overlooking every eminence in the vicinity. Every thing was prepared in two days, and the Governor ordered that the next morning all should join in a solemn procession to it, except an armed squadron of horse and foot, who should be on the alert, to protect the army.

The Cacique walked beside the Governor, and many of the savage warriors mingled among the Spaniards. Before them went a choir of priests and friars, chanting the litany, while the soldiers responded. The procession, in which were more than a thousand persons, both Spaniards and Indians, wound slowly and solemnly along, until it arrived before the cross, where all sank upon their knees. Two or three prayers were now offered up; they then arose, and, two by two, approached the holy emblem, bent the knee before it, and worshipped and kissed it.

On the opposite shore of the river were collected fifteen or twenty thousand savages, of both sexes,

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and all ages, to witness this singular but imposing ceremony. With their arms extended, and their hands raised, they watched the movements of the Spaniards. Ever and anon they raised their eyes to heaven, and made signs with their faces and hands, as if asking of God to listen to the Christian prayer. Then would they raise a low and wailing cry, like people in excessive grief, echoed by the plaintive murmurings of their childrens' voices. De Soto and his followers were moved to tenderness, to behold, in a strange and heathen land, a savage people, worshipping with such deep humility and tears, the emblem of our redemption. Observing the same order, the procession returned; the priests chanted forth *Te Deum laudamus,* and with it closed the solemnities of the day.

God, in his mercy, says the Spanish chronicler, willing to show these heathens, that he listeneth unto those who call upon him in truth, sent down, in the middle of the ensuing night, a plenteous rain, to the great joy of the Indians.*

The Cacique, with his warriors, astonished and overjoyed at this unhoped for blessing, formed a procession, in imitation of the Christians, and repaired to De Soto to express his gratitude for the kindness his God had shewn them through his intercession.

* Las Casas, L. 4. c. 6.

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The Governor answered them, that they must give thanks to God, who created the heavens and earth, and was the bestower of these and other far greater mercies.

It is a reflection, replete with interest, that nearly three centuries ago, the cross, the type of our beautiful religion, was planted on the banks of the Mississippi, and its silent forests were awakened by the Christian's hymn of gratitude and praise. The effect was vivid but transitory. The "voice cried in the wilderness," and reached and was answered by every heart, but it died away, and was forgotten, and was not to be heard again in that savage region, for many generations. It was as if a lightning gleam had broken for a moment upon a benighted world, startling it with sudden effulgence, only to leave it in tenfold gloom. The real dawning was yet afar off from the benighted valley of the Mississippi.

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CHAPTER XIX.

Expedition against the Cacique Capaha. His village is sacked. Fortifies himself in an island, where he is again assailed. The Spaniards deserted by their allies, the Casquins.

1541. As the army had been already quartered nine or ten days in this village, De Soto gave orders for them to prepare to march the following morning. The Cacique, who was about fifty years of age, obtained permission of the Governor to go with him, with a train of his warriors and domestics; the one to escort the army, the other to carry his supplies, as they had to traverse a wilderness and also to clear the road, gather wood for the encampment, and fodder for the horses. The true object of the Cacique, however, was to avail himself of the presence of the Spaniards to wreak vengeance on a neighbouring chieftain called Capaha.* A war had existed between the tribes for several generations; but the present Cacique of Capaha had gain-

* In the Portuguese Narration, the name of this Cacique is spelt Pacaha.

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ed the ascendancy, and kept Casquin in continual awe and subjection, by the superiority of his forces.

In the morning, the Cacique Casquin took the field, to escort the Governor. He had three thousand Indians laden with supplies, and with the baggage of the army, who were all armed with bows and arrows. But beside these, he had five thousand of his choicest warriors, well armed, fiercely painted, and decorated with their war plumes. With these he secretly meditated a signal ravage.

With permission of the Governor, he took the lead, under pretence of clearing the road of any lurking foe, and preparing every thing for the encampment of the Spaniards. He divided his men into squadrons, and marched, in good military array, a quarter of a league in advance. By night he posted sentinels in the same manner as the Spaniards.

In this way they travelled for three days, at the end of which they came to a great swamp, miry on the borders, with a lake in the centre, too deep to be forded, and which formed a kind of gulf on the Mississippi, into which it emptied itself.* Across this piece of water the Indians of Casquin constructed a rude bridge, of trunks of trees laid upon posts driven into the bottom of the lake, with a row of stakes above the bridge, for those who crossed

* Inca, Lib. 4, c. 7. Portuguese Relation, c. 23.

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to hold by. The horses were obliged to swim, and were got across with great difficulty, on account of the deep mire. This swamp separated the two hostile provinces of Casquin and Capaha. The Spaniards were nearly the whole day in crossing it, and encamped in beautiful meadows about half a league beyond.

After travelling two days more, they came early on the third day to some elevated ridges, from whence they descried the principal town of Capaha, the frontier post and defence of the province.*

It contained five hundred large houses, and was situated on a high ground which commanded the surrounding country. It was nearly encircled by a deep moat, fifty paces in breadth; and where the moat did not extend, was defended by a strong wall of timber and plaster, such as has already been described. The moat was filled with water by a canal, cut from the Mississippi, which was three leagues distant. The canal was deep, and sufficiently wide for two canoes to pass abreast, without touching each others' paddles. This canal and moat were filled with fish, so as to supply all the wants of the village and army, without any apparent diminution of their number.

* This was the northernmost point reached by De Soto, on the Mississippi.

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Capaha had received intelligence by his scouts of the formidable allies who accompanied his old antagonist, Casquin. His own warriors were dispersed, and not sufficient in number to resist such additional force. As soon, therefore, as he saw the enemy approaching, he sprang into a canoe in the moat, and passing along the canal into the Grand River, took refuge in a strong island. Such of his people as had canoes followed him, others fled into the neighbouring woods, while some lingered in the village.

Casquin marching, as usual, in the advance, arrived with his warriors at the village some time before the Spaniards. Meeting with no resistance, he entered it warily, suspecting some ambush. This gave time for many of the loiterers to escape.

As soon as Casquin ascertained that the village lay at his mercy, he gave full vent to his hatred and vengeance. His warriors scoured the place, killed and scalped all the men they met, to the number of a hundred and fifty; sacked and plundered the houses, and made captives of many boys, women and children. Among the captives were two of the numerous wives of Capaha; they were young and beautiful, and had been prevented from embarking with the Cacique, by the confusion and alarm occasioned by the approach of the enemy.

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The hostility of Casquin and his warriors was not confined to the living, but extended to the dead. They broke into the grand sepulchre or mausoleum, in the public square, which the Indians hold so sacred. Here were deposited the remains of the ancestors of the Cacique, and of the great men of his tribe, and here were treasured up the trophies gained over the people of Casquin in many a past battle. These trophies they tore down from the walls, and stripped the sepulchre of all its ornaments and treasures. They then threw down the wooden coffins, in which were the remains of the dead, trampled upon the bodies, scattered about the bones, and wreaked upon them all kinds of insults and indignities, in revenge for past injuries, which the deceased had inflicted upon their tribe. At the entrance of the sepulchre were the heads of many of their warriors, who had been slain in former battles, and which were here stuck on the ends of pikes as warlike trophies. These they took down, and bore away with them, replacing them with the heads of the enemies they had massacred. They would have completed their triumph by setting fire to the sepulchre and the whole village, but were restrained by a fear of offending the Governor. All these outrages were perpetrated before the Spaniards had reached the place.

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De Soto was much concerned at this ravage of his allies. He immediately sent envoys to Capaha, to the island on which he had fortified himself, with proffers of friendship. They were indignantly rejected; and the Governor learnt that the Cacique was summoning all his warriors, and breathing vengeance.

Finding every effort to conciliate the Chieftain fruitless, the Governor determined to attack him in his strong hold. Casquin provided above seventy canoes for the purpose; and an invasion of the island was made by two hundred Spaniards and three thousand Indians.

The island was covered with a dense forest of trees and underwood, and the Cacique had fortified himself strongly with barricades. The Spaniards effected a landing with great difficulty; gained the first barrier by hard fighting, and pressed on to the second, within which the women and children were sheltered. Here the warriors of Capaha fought with redoubled fury, and struck such dismay into the people of Casquin, that they abandoned their Spanish allies and fled to their canoes; nay, they would have carried off the canoes of the Spaniards also, had there not been a couple of soldiers in each, to guard them.

The Spaniards, thus deserted by their pusillani-

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mous allies, and being overpowered by numbers, began to retreat in good order to their canoes. They would all, however, have been cut off, had not Capaha restrained the fury of his warriors, and suffered them to regain the shore and embark unmolested.

This unexpected forbearance on the part of the savage chieftain, surprised the Adelantado. On the following day, four principal warriors arrived on an embassy from Capaha. They came with great ceremony; bowed to the sun, the moon, and the Governor; but took no notice of Casquin, who was present, treating him with utter contempt and disdain. In the name of their Cacique, they prayed oblivion of the past, and amity for the future, and declared that their chieftain was ready to come in person and do homage. The General received them with the utmost affability, assured them of his friendship, and sent them away well pleased with their reception.

Casquin was vexed at this negotiation, and would fain have prolonged the hostilities between the Spaniards and his ancient enemies; but the Governor was as much charmed with the frankness and magnanimity of one Cacique, as he had been displeased with the craft and cruelty of the other. He issued orders, forbidding any one to injure the natives of the province or their possessions.

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In order to appease the Governor for the dastardly flight of his warriors, Casquin made him presents of fish, together with mantles and skins of various kinds; and moreover, brought him one of his daughters as a handmaid. De Soto, however, was not thoroughly to be reconciled. He permitted the Cacique to remain with him, and to retain about him a sufficient number of vassals for his personal service, but obliged him to send home all his warriors.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, lib. 4, c. 7, 8, 9. Portuguese Narrative, c. 24.

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CHAPTER XX.

Interview between the Cacique Capaha and De Soto. His two beautiful wives, and their fate.

1541. On the following morning, Capaha came to the Governor, at the village, attended by a train of a hundred warriors, decorated with beautiful plumes, and with mantles of all kinds of skins. He was about twenty-six years old, of noble person and fine demeanour. On entering the village, his first care, before waiting on the Governor, was to visit the sepulchre of his ancestors. The indignities that had been offered to their remains are such as an Indian feels most acutely. The Cacique, however, concealed the grief and rage that burnt within his bosom. Gathering up the scattered bones in silence, he kissed them, and returned them reverently to the coffins; and having arranged the sepulchre, as well as circumstances would permit, proceeded to the quarters of the Governor.

De Soto came forth to receive him, accompanied by Casquin. The Cacique paid his homage to the Governor, offering himself as his vassal; but he took no more notice of his old adversary, Casquin, than

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if he had not been present. The Governor embraced Capaha as a friend, and he was honorably treated by all the officers. The Cacique answered to numerous questions concerning his territories, with great clearness and intelligence. When the Governor had ceased his interrogatories, and there was a pause, Capaha could no longer restrain his smothered indignation. Turning suddenly to his rival Cacique, "Doubtless, Casquin," said he, "you exult in having revenged your past defeats; a thing you could never have hoped or effected through your own forces. You may thank these strangers for it. They will go, but we shall remain in our own country as we were before. Pray to the sun and moon to send us good weather, then!"

The Governor interposed, and endeavoured to produce a thorough reconciliation between the Caciques. In deference to him, Capaha repressed his wrath, and embraced his adversary; but there were occasional glances between them that portended a future storm, and the proud Capaha was constantly on the alert on all points of ceremony and precedence, and made Casquin give way to his superior pretensions.

The Governor and the two Caciques partook of a repast together, after which the two young and beautiful wives of Capaha, who had been captured,

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were brought to be restored to him. He received them with many acknowledgments of the generosity thus shown towards him, and then offered them as presents to the Governor. On De Soto's declining them, he begged him to accept them and give them to some of his officers or soldiers, or to whom he pleased, as they could not be admitted again into his household, nor remain in his territories. The Governor, seeing that he contemned them, and considered them as dishonoured, was persuaded to receive them under his protection; knowing the laws and customs of these savages to be cruel in the extreme, when the chastity of their wives was concerned.*

In the town of Capaha, the Spaniards found a great variety of skins of deer, panthers, bears, and wild cats. Of these they made garments, of which they stood in great need, many of them being nearly naked. They made moccasons of deer-skins, and used the bear-skins as cloaks. They found Indian

* The Portuguese historian says, that these beautiful females were the *sisters* of the Cacique Capaha, and that he begged De Soto to accept them and marry them, as pledges of his affection. The one, he added, was called Macanoche, and the other Mochifa; both handsome and well shaped; especially the former, whose features were beautiful, her countenance pleasing, and her air majestic. We have followed the account of the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega.

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bucklers formed of buffalo hides, which the troops took possession of.

While quartered in the village, they were abundantly supplied with fish, taken from the adjacent moat, which formed a kind of wier, into which incredible numbers entered from the Mississippi. Among these was a kind called bagres, the head of which was one-third of its bulk, and about its fins and along its sides, it had bones as sharp as needles. Some of these caught in the Mississippi weighed from a hundred to a hundred and fifty pounds weight.* There was another fish, also, of a curious shape, having a snout a cubit in length, the upper lip like a spade or peel:† neither of these two species of fish had scales. The Indians likewise brought a fish occasionally, as large as a hog, which had several rows of teeth above and below.

* The cat-fish.

† This spade or palat-fish, is at present so rare as scarcely to be met with; but seems to have been peculiar to this region.—Vide Flint's Geography of the Mississippi, v. 1. p. 128 and 129.
Nuttall's Arkansas, p. 254.

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CHAPTER XXI.

Two soldiers despatched in search of salt and gold, and the account they brought back. The Spaniards arrive at Quiguate. Juan Gaytan refuses to perform his duty, and what De Soto did thereupon.

1541. WHILE in the territory of Capaha, the Governor gathered intelligence from the Indians, that at about forty leagues distance, among certain ranges of hills, there was much salt, and also much of a yellowish metal. As the army was suffering for the want of salt, and still retained their eagerness for gold, De Soto despatched two trusty and intelligent men, named Hernando de Silvera and Pedro Moreno, accompanied by Indian guides, to visit this region. At the end of eleven days they returned, quite spent and half famished, having eaten nothing but green plums and green maize, which they found in some squalid wigwams; six of their Indian companions were laden with rock salt in natural crystals, and one with copper. The country through which they had passed was sterile and thinly peopled, and the Indians informed the Governor, that still further to the north, the country was almost uninhabited, on

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account of the cold. The buffalo roamed there in such numbers that the natives could not cultivate fields of maize; they subsisted, therefore, by the chase, and principally on the flesh of these wild animals.*

Hearing this unfavourable account of the country, and that there was no gold in that direction, De Soto returned with his army to the village of Casquin, to strike from thence westward; for hitherto, ever since leaving Mauvila, he had kept northward, to avoid the sea.† After sojourning five days in the village of Casquin, he proceeded four days down along the bank of the river, through a fertile and populous country, until he came to the province of Quiguate, where he was well received. Keeping down the river for five days longer, he came, on the fourth of August, to the chief village of the province, called by the same name. Here he took up his quarters during six days, in the house of the Cacique.

One night while lodged here, the Governor was informed at midnight, that the treasurer, Juan Gaytan, who was allotted to the patrol at four in the morning, refused to perform his duty, giving his official station as an excuse. De Soto waxed wroth

* Portuguese Relation, c. 24.

† Garcilaso de la Vega, L. 4, c. 11.

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at this; for this cavalier was one of those who had murmured at Mauvila, and had said that he would return to Spain or Mexico, as soon as they reached the ships.

Leaving his bed, and sallying forth on the terrace before the house of the Cacique, which overlooked the village, the Governor raised his voice until it resounded through the place. "What is this, soldiers and captains!" cried he. "Do the mutineers still live who, when in Mauvila, talked of returning to Spain or Mexico? and do they now, with the excuse of being officers of the royal revenue, refuse to patrol the four hours that fall to their share? Why do you desire to return to Spain?—have you left any hereditary estates that you wish to enjoy? Why do you wish to go to Mexico?—to prove the baseness and pusillanimity of your spirits? That, having it in your power to become chieftains in a vast and noble country you had discovered, you preferred living dependants in a stranger's house, and guests at a stranger's table, rather than maintain house and table of your own! What honor will this confer upon you? Shame—shame on you! blush for yourselves, and recollect that officers of the royal treasury or not, you must all serve your sovereign! Presume not upon any rank you may possess; for, be he who he may, I will take off the head of that man who re-

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fuses to do his duty. And, to undeceive you, know that whilst I live, no one shall leave this country until we have conquered and settled it."

These words, uttered in a great rage, shewed the cause of that moody melancholy which the Governor had manifested ever since he left Mauvila. This outbreak had a visible effect upon the soldiery. They saw that their general was not to be trifled with, and they thenceforth obeyed his orders without murmuring.

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CHAPTER XXII.

The Spaniards arrive at Coligoa—pass through the province of Palisema, into the country of the Tunicas. The manner in which the natives made salt. Enter the province of Tula. Attack upon an Indian village. Struggle between a soldier and five women.

1541. From Quiguate, De Soto shaped his course to the north-west, in search of a province called Coligoa, lying at the foot of mountains, beyond which he thought there might be a gold region. He was guided by a single Indian, who led the army for several days through dreary forests and frequent marshes, until they came to the village of Coligoa, on the margin of a small river. The natives, not being apprised of the coming of the Spaniards, threw themselves into the river on their approach, and fled. The troopers pursued them, and took a number of prisoners of both sexes. In a few days the Cacique came to wait upon De Soto, bringing him a present of mantles, deer-skins, and hides of the bison or buffalo, and informed him that about six leagues to the northward, was a

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thinly peopled country, where vast herds of these wild buffalo ranged;* but that to the southward, there was a populous and plentiful province, called Cayas.

The Cacique of Coligoa furnishing the Spaniards with a guide, they resumed their march, striking towards the south, and after a journey of five days, entered the province of Palisema. The Cacique had fled, but had left his dwelling furnished and arranged in order for De Soto. The walls were hung with deer-skins, so admirably dyed and dressed, that they appeared to the eye like beautiful tapestry. The floor was likewise covered with similar fine skins.†

They made but a short halt in this province, as the supply of maize was scanty, and, pushing onward rapidly, in four days crossed the frontiers of the province of Cayas, and encamped on the banks of a river near a village called Tanico.‡

The waters of this river, and of an adjacent lake, were impregnated with salt; so much so, as to leave a deposit in the blue sand which bordered their

* This province is supposed to have been situated towards the sources of the St. Francis, or the hills of White River.—Vide Nuttall's Arkansas, p. 256.

† Portuguese Relation, c. 25.

‡ Supposed to have belonged to the tribe of the Tunicas.—Vide Nuttall's Arkansas, p. 257.

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shores. The Indians were accustomed to collect this sand in baskets, wide above and narrow below, which were suspended in the air on a pole. Water was then poured upon the sand, and draining through it, fell into a vessel beneath, carrying with it the saline particles. The water was then evaporated by boiling, so as to leave the chrystallized salt in the bottom of the pot. This the Indians used as an article of traffic, exchanging it with their neighbours for skins and mantles.

The Spaniards were overjoyed at finding an article of which they were so much in need; they remained eight days making salt, and several who had suffered excessively for the want of it, indulged in it so immoderately as to bring on maladies, and in some instances death.

Having laid in a large supply of salt, they pursued their journey, and arriving at the province of Tula, marched four days through a wilderness, when they halted about midday in a beautiful plain, within half a league of the principal village. In the afternoon, the Governor set out with a strong party of horse and foot, to reconnoitre the village. It was seated in a plain betwixt two streams. On their approach, the inhabitants seized their arms and sallied bravely forth, the women rushing to combat as fiercely as the men.

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The Spaniards soon drove them back, and entered the village fighting. The savages fought from house top to house top, disdaining to ask for quarter, and struggling desperately, to the death. During the conflict, a soldier entered one of the houses and escaped to an upper chamber, which was used as a granary, where he found five women, hid in one corner. He made signs to them not to be alarmed, as he did not wish to injure them: his caution was unnecessary, for they flew on him like so many mastiffs upon a bull. In his struggle to shake them off, he thrust his leg, unto the very thigh, through the slight floor of reeds, so that he remained seated on the floor, at the mercy of those furies, who, with biting and blows, were in a fair way of killing him. Notwithstanding the strait he was in, the sturdy soldier was ashamed to call for succour, because his antagonists were women.

At this moment, another soldier happened to enter below, and seeing a naked leg dangling through the ceiling, at first thought it the limb of an Indian, and raised his sword to give it a sweeping blow, when, observing it more narrowly, and hearing the clamour over head, he suspected the truth of the matter, and calling two of his companions, they ascended to the rescue of their comrade; so fierce, however, was the fury of the women, that not one

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of them would quit her hold upon the soldier, until they were all slain.

At a late hour the Governor drew off his men from the village, and returned to the camp; vexed at having been drawn into so unprofitable a battle, wherein so many of his followers were badly wounded.*

* Portuguese Relation c. 25. 26. Garcilaso de la Vega, L. 4, c. 12.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

What the Spaniards found in the village of Tula. The tribe of Tula differed from any Indians they had seen. They fall suddenly upon the encampment at night. The prowess of an Indian, and his fate.

1541. On the following day, the army entered the village and found it abandoned. In the afterpart of the day, bands of horse scoured the country in every direction. They met several of the natives, but it was impossible to bring them in alive, or obtain any information from them. They threw themselves upon the ground, crying "Kill me or leave me!" nor could the death of some conquer the obstinacy of the rest.

In this village, the Spaniards found the flesh of buffaloes and numerous skins of the same animal; some in their raw state, others dressed for robes and blankets. They sought in vain, however, to meet with the buffalo alive, but still learnt that they existed in great herds to the northward. The natives of the province of Tula differed from all the Indians they had yet seen. The others were handsome and

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well formed, but these, both men and women, were extremely ill-favoured. Their heads were incredibly large, and narrow at the top; a shape produced by being compressed by bandages, from their birth until they were nine or ten years of age. Their faces, particularly their lips, inside and out, were hideously tattooed; and their dispositions were in unison with their dreadful aspects.

On the fourth night that the Spaniards were in the village, the Indians came in great numbers, and so silently, that before the sentinels perceived them, they burst upon the encampment in three different parts. Loud were the shouts, and great the confusion; for, in the obscurity of the night, it was impossible to distinguish friends from foes. The Spaniards shouted the names of the Virgin and Santiago, to prevent their wounding one another. The savages, likewise, shouted the name of Tula. Many of them, instead of bows and arrows had staves like pikes, two or three yards in length, which were new to the soldiers, and with which they gave very severe blows.

Thus stubbornly they fought for more than an hour, and they did not retreat to the woods until day began to dawn. The Spaniards did not pursue them, but returned to the village to take care of the wounded, of which there were many, although there were only four killed.

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After the battle several of the Spaniards, as usual, were scattered about the field examining the dead. Three foot soldiers and two on horseback were thus employed, when one of the former saw an Indian raise his head from among the bushes and immediately conceal it again. He gave the cry of Indians! Indians! The two men on horseback, thinking some of the enemy were coming in force, galloped off in different directions to meet them. In the mean time, the foot soldier who had discovered the Indian among the bushes, ran up to kill him.

The savage, seeing he could not escape, stepped forth manfully to the encounter, armed with a Spanish battle axe, which he had gained that morning in the village. Taking it in both hands, he struck the shield of the soldier, severed it in two, and badly wounded his arm. The pain of the wound was so great and the blow so violent, that the Spaniard had not strength to attack his foe. The Indian then rushed upon the other soldier who was coming up, struck his shield in the same manner, broke it in twain, wounded him likewise in the arm, and disabled him. One of those on horse seeing his companions so roughly handled, charged upon the Indian, who took shelter under an oak tree. The Spaniard, not being able to ride under the tree, drew near, and made several powerful thrusts at the Indian, but could

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not reach him. The savage rushed out, brandished the battle axe with both hands, struck the horse across the shoulder, and laid it open from the withers to the knee, so as to deprive him of the power of moving.

At this moment, Gonzalo Silvestre, who was on foot, came up. He had been in no haste, deeming two foot soldiers and three horsemen sufficient to manage one Indian. The latter, elated by his success, advanced to receive him with great boldness. Grasping the battle axe in both hands, he gave a blow similar to the two first; but Silvestre was more guarded than his companions. The weapon glanced over the shield and stuck in the ground. Silvestre having the savage at advantage, gave him a diagonal blow with his sword, which laid open his face and breast, and entering his arm, nearly severed the wrist. The infidel seizing the axe, between the stump and his other hand, with a desperate leap, made an attempt to wound the Spaniard in the face; but Silvestre again warding off the blow with his shield, gave him a sweeping cut across the waist, that passed through his naked body, and he fell dead, cut completely asunder.*

* The Inca says that the blow was so powerful, and the sword so keen, that the Indian remained for a few seconds standing on his feet, and saying to the Spaniard, "Peace be with you," (quedate en pas,) fell dead in two halves! The feat, as told in the text, is sufficiently strong for belief.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

The army arrives at Utiangue. The Governor determines to winter there. Preparations accordingly. Death of Juan Ortiz, the interpreter.

1541. The Spaniards sojourned in the village of Tula twenty days, curing the wounded. During this time, they made many incursions in different parts of the province. They found it very populous; but, although they captured many of the inhabitants, it was impossible, either by presents or menaces, to acquire their friendship, or to bring them into obedience. So extreme was the ferocity of this tribe, that they were the dread of all their neighbours, who used the name of Tula as an object of nursery terror to their unruly children.

The army continued their march in quest of the province called Utiangue, or Autiamque; about ten days' journey, or eighty leagues from Tula; near which, the Indians said, there was a large lake, which the Spaniards hoped might prove an arm of the sea. Five days of their journey was over a rough, mountainous country, closely wooded, where

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they found a village called Quipana;* but could take none of the inhabitants, the forests impeding the speed of their horses.

After a further march of a few days they entered the province of Utiangue. It was very fertile, with a scattered but warlike population. They were harassed incessantly by ambuscades and skirmishes, but kept steadfastly on, until they reached the village of Utiangue, from which the province took its name. It contained numerous well built houses, and was situated in a fine plain, watered by a wide running river, the same that passed through the province of Cayas.† It was bordered by meadows that afforded excellent pasturage for the horses. The town was abandoned by its inhabitants, excepting a few lingerers whom they made prisoners. The houses were well stocked with maize, small beans, nuts, and plums.

As the season was far advanced, De Soto determined to winter here. He encamped in the centre of the village, but apart from the houses, lest the Indians should set fire to them in the night. He then set to work to fortify the place. The ground that was to be enclosed was measured out, and a portion assigned to each, according to the number

* Supposed to be in the country of the Kappaws, or Quapaws.

† Supposed to be the Arkansas.

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of slaves he owned. Thus every one had his task, and worked with emulation, the Indians bringing the wood; and in three days the village was surrounded by strong palisades, driven deep into the ground, and fastened by thwart pieces.

In addition to the ample supply of provisions found in the village, the Spaniards foraged the surrounding country, which was very fertile, and brought in abundance of maize, dried fruits, and various kinds of grain. They were extremely successful, also, in the chase; killing great quantities of venison. The province, moreover, abounded, to an unusual degree, with rabbits, of which they found two species; one of the usual size, the other as large and strong as a hare, and much fatter. These the Indians were accustomed to snare with running nooses.

The Cacique of the province sent messengers from time to time, with presents, and promises of friendly service, but never made his appearance. His messengers also, always came at night; and, after delivering their message loitered about the camp, noticing the men, horses, and weapons, until it became evident they only came as spies. The Governor, therefore, gave orders, that no Indian messenger should be admitted at night; and one, persisting to enter, was killed by a sentinel; which put an end to all embassies of the kind.

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The Spaniards, however, were often waylaid and assaulted, when out on foraging and hunting parties, but gave good account of their assailants.

The winter was severe, with great falls of snow. At one time the Spaniards were blocked up for upwards of a month, until at last fire-wood began to fail them. Upon this, De Soto turned out with all the horse, and, by riding backward and forward, made a track from the camp to a forest, about two bow-shot distant. This enabled the men to go thither and cut fuel.*

Upon the whole, though the weather was severe, yet, having good quarters, and fuel and food in abundance, the Spaniards passed the pleasantest winter they had experienced in the course of their expedition; and enjoyed their present ease, and comfort, and abundance, with the greater zest, from the frightful hardships and disasters they had experienced.

During their residence in this village, Juan Ortiz, the interpreter, died. His death was a severe loss to the service; as he had, throughout the expedition, served as the main organ of communication between the Spaniards and the natives. It is true, that, even with his assistance, these communications were extremely imperfect, and subject to many er-

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 27.

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rors and misinterpretations. Juan Ortiz was acquainted merely with the language of the Indians in the neighbourhood of Espiritu Santo; whereas, in the march of the army, they were continually passing through new provinces, with each its particular tongue. It was necessary, therefore, to have an Indian from almost every tribe, as an interpreter; which rendered their mode of communication awkward in the extreme.

In treating with a Cacique, the word given by the Governor to Juan Ortiz, was passed from mouth to mouth of perhaps eight or ten Indians, of different tribes, before it reached the person to be addressed; and the reply was transmitted in the same tedious method to the Governor. Information, also, concerning any new region or any distant place, had to be collected in the same manner; subject to perversions and misunderstandings in the course of its transmission.

Hence arose continual errors among the Spaniards, as to the country and its inhabitants, which often bewildered them in their wanderings, and doubtless led to many sanguinary affairs with the natives, which a proper understanding of each other might have prevented.

The death of Juan Ortiz increased these disadvantages ten fold. Henceforth they had no other

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interpreter, through whom to communicate in the first instance with the natives, but the young Indian brought from Cofachiqui. He, however, had acquired but an imperfect knowledge of the Spanish language, and was deficient in the sagacity, the general information and varied experience, which had distinguished Juan Ortiz.

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CHAPTER XXV.

Change in the views and plans of De Soto. He turns his steps towards the Mississippi. A soldier drowned in attempting to cross a lake. The Spaniards pass through the province of Anilco. Hostile bearing of the Cacique. Arrival at Guachoya.

1542. The feelings and views of Hernando De Soto had recently undergone a change. The anger which had induced him so suddenly to alter his plans at Mauvila, and turn his back abruptly on the sea, had gradually subsided. His hopes of finding a golden region were fast fading away. He had lost nearly half of his troops by fighting and by sickness, and by hardships of various kinds; the greater part of his horses, too, had been slain or had perished; of the residue, many were lame, and all had been without shoes for above a year, for want of iron. He was daily more and more sensible, also, of the loss he had sustained in the death of Juan Ortiz. The young Indian of Cofachiqui, who succeeded him as interpreter, made continual blunders as to the accounts of the country, the rivers, routes, and dis-

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tances, and there was danger, through his misinformation, that the army might be led into difficulties, and become perplexed and lost in the vast and trackless wilderness they had to traverse.

Bitterly now did De Soto repent his having abandoned his original plan of joining his ships, and founding a settlement in the bay of Achusi. He was too far from the sea to attempt reaching it now by a direct march; but he resolved to give over his wandering in the interior, and make the best of his way to the Mississippi. Here he would choose some suitable village on its banks for a fortified post; establish himself there; build two brigantines, in which some of his most confidential followers might descend the river, carry tidings of his safety to his wife and friends in Cuba, and procure reinforcements of men and horses, together with flocks, herds, seeds, and every thing else necessary to colonize and secure the possession of the vast and fertile country he had overrun.*

As soon as the spring was sufficiently advanced, therefore, De Soto broke up his winter cantonment at Utiangue, and set out in a direction for the Rio Grande, or Mississippi. He had received intelligence of a village called Anilco, situated on a great river

* Portuguese relation, c. 28. Garcilaso de la Vega, lib. 5. p. 1, c. 3.

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which emptied into the Mississippi; and towards that village he shaped his course.

After leaving Utiangue, he sojourned for ten days in the province of Ayas, at a village situated on the same river which passed by Cayas and Utiangue.* In this time, a boat was constructed, in which they all passed the river, but were detained four days on its banks by snow and bad weather. They then journeyed for three days through a low country, cut up by ravines, and perplexed with swamps. It was toilsome marching for the foot soldiers. As to the troopers, they were always to the stirrup, sometimes to the knees, in water, and now and then they were obliged to swim their horses.

At a town called Tultelpina, they were checked in their march by a lake, which emptied itself into a river. The waters were high and turbulent. De Soto ordered one of his captains to embark in a canoe with five men, and cross the lake. The impetuous current overturned the frail bark: some of the men clung to it, others to the trees that were standing in the water; but one, Francisco Bastian, a Spaniard of rank, was unfortunately drowned. De Soto then sought to find a route along the borders of the lake, but in vain. At length, at the suggestion of two Indians of Tultelpina, he caused light

* Supposed to be the Arkansas.

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rafts to be made of reeds, and the wood work of the houses, and in this way transported the army across.*

Urging their way forward, the Spaniards now reached the province of Anilco, and penetrated about thirty leagues, passing several villages, until they reached the principal one, which gave its name to the province. It was situated in a champaign country, on the banks of a river, and contained about four hundred spacious houses, built round a square. The residence of the Cacique, as usual, was posted on a high artificial mound. The country was so well peopled, that there were several other villages in sight, and there was such abundance of maize, of fruits, and pulse, of various kinds, that the Spaniards pronounced it the most fertile and populous country they had met with, excepting Coza and Apalachee.

On the approach of the Spaniards, the inhabitants made some show of resistance, and skirmished slightly; but it was only to cover the retreat of their wives and children across the river, on rafts and canoes. Some few were taken before they could embark. Many more were found in the village, who had not been able to escape.

Soon after the Governor had taken up his quarters in the village, an Indian of distinction, attended

* Portuguese Relation, c. 28.

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by a few others, came to him, in the name of the Cacique, with a present of a mantle of martin skins and a string of large pearls. De Soto gave the principal Indian of the embassy a collar of mother of pearl, and some other trinkets, with which he went away, apparently well satisfied. The negotiation which opened thus favourably, ended in nothing; and the ambassadors proved to have been mere spies, sent to observe the force of the strangers. The Cacique could not be induced to enter into friendly intercourse, treating all messengers sent to him with great haughtiness, and giving various signs of determined hostility.

The river that ran by the village of Anilco, was the same that passed by Cayas and Utiangue; and De Soto was informed, that at no great distance it emptied itself into the Mississippi.* Near to the confluence of the two streams, he was told, there was situated on the banks of the Mississippi, a large village, called Guachoya, the capital of a populous and fruitful province of the same name, the Cacique of which was continually at war with the Chief of Anilco.

De Soto determined to proceed to this province, in hopes that the sea might lie at no great distance from it. At any rate, the village of Guachoya might

* The river is supposed to be the Arkansas.

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prove an advantageous site for the building of his brigantines, and the cantonment of his troops. As soon, therefore, as canoes could be procured, and rafts constructed, to cross the river opposite the village of Anilco, the army resumed its march, over a hilly, uninhabited country, and in four days arrived at the village of Guachoya. It contained about three hundred houses, and was situated about a bow-shot from the Mississippi, on two contiguous hills, with a small intervening plain, that served as a public square. The whole was fortified by palisades. The inhabitants had fled across the Mississippi in their canoes, taking with them most of their effects; but Juan de Añasco foraged the neighbourhood, and brought in a great supply of maize, beans, dried fruits, and cakes made of pressed plums, or persimmons.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

Meeting between De Soto and the Cacique Guachoya. Añasco despatched to seek for the sea. Expedition by land and water against the Chieftain Anilco, and the result.

1542. De Soto took up his quarters in the house of the Cacique, which was spacious, and situated on the summit of one of the hills. Four days were passed in messages between him and the Cacique, who was extremely distrustful of the Spaniards. At length, the apprehensions of the Chieftain were removed, and on the fifth day he visited the army. He came with a retinue of a hundred warriors, decked out in savage finery, and bringing presents of mantles and deer-skins, together with fish and dogs.

The Governor received Guachoya very courteously at the door of his mansion, and conducted him into the great saloon, or hall of the building. The attendants of the Cacique ranged themselves round the apartment among the Spaniards, while their Chief and the Governor held a long conversation,

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through the medium of interpreters, concerning the province and the surrounding territories.

In the midst of the conversation, the Cacique happened to sneeze. Upon this, all his attendants bowed their heads, opened and closed their arms, and making other signs of veneration, saluted the Cacique with various phrases of the same purport—May the sun guard you—may the sun be with you—may the sun shine upon you—defend you—prosper you, and the like; each one uttered the phrase that came first to mind, and for a short time there was a universal murmuring of these compliments.*

The Spaniards were surprised to observe among these rude savages the same kind of ceremonials which were used on this simple occasion by the most polished natives of Europe; and the Governor turning to his officers, said, smilingly, "you see the world is every where the same."

The Cacique ate at the Governor's table. His Indians remained in attendance, and would not go to their own repast until he had finished, although repeatedly invited. They then dined in the quarters, where a general repast was provided. The Cacique lodged in a part of his own dwelling, with a few of his own attendants; his warriors, at sunset, crossing

* Garcilaso de la Vega, p. 1, lib. 5. c. 5.

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to the opposite side of the river and returning in the morning. This they continued to do while the Spaniards remained in the village.

One of the first questions that De Soto had asked of the Cacique was, whether he knew any thing of the sea. Guachoya, however, professed utter ignorance of any such great body of water; his knowledge of the country down to the river, did not extend beyond a great province called Quigualtanqui; the Cacique whereof, he said, was the greatest Chieftain in all these parts.

The Governor suspected his ignorance to be feigned, and accordingly despatched Juan de Añasco, with eight troopers, to explore the course of the river, and ascertain whether the sea was near. De Añasco returned after eight days' absencé, in all which time, he had not been able to advance above fifteen leagues, on account of the great windings of the river, and the swamps and torrents with which it was bordered.*

This information determined De Soto to build two brigantines at Gauchoya, and to found his projected settlement between that place and Anilco, in a fertile country, where supplies were easily to be had. In this settlement it was his intention to remain, until the brigantines should return with reinforcements

* Portuguese Relation, c. 29.

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and supplies. To enable him to pursue these plans without molestation, it was important for him to conciliate the friendship of the Cacique Anilco, whose territories lay adjacent, and who would be enabled to render him much assistance, if an ally, and great annoyance, if an enemy.

The Cacique Guachoya, finding out something of the Governor's inclinations, advised him to return to the province of Anilco, offering to accompany and aid him with his people. As he would have to re-cross the river that ran by the village of Anilco, and threw itself into the Mississippi, the Cacique offered to supply eighty large, and numerous small canoes. These canoes would have to proceed seven leagues along the Mississippi, to the mouth of the river Anilco, up which they would ascend to the village; the whole distance being twenty leagues of navigation. Meantime the Governor and Cacique, with their forces, would proceed by land, so as to arrive opposite the village at the same time with the canoes.

Arrangements were made accordingly. As soon as the canoes were ready, four thousand Indian warriors embarked in them, beside the rowers; with these, the Governor sent Captain Juan de Guzman and his company, to have command of the canoes, and keep the Indians in order. Three days were allowed them for the voyage.

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At the same time that the canoes departed, the Governor set out by land with his troops, accompanied by the Cacique, at the head of two thousand warriors, beside those who carried provisions.

The two expeditions arrived safely at the time appointed, opposite the village. The Cacique of Anilco was absent, but the inhabitants of the place made a stand at the pass of the river. Nuño Tobar fell furiously upon them with a party of horse. Eager for the fight, they charged so heedlessly, that each trooper found himself surrounded by a band of Indians. The poor savages, however, were so panic stricken, that they turned their backs upon the village, and fled in wild disorder to the forests, amid the shouts of the pursuers, and the shrieks and cries of the women and children.* Guachoya now gave full sway to his thirst for vengeance; for, in his whole alliance with the Spaniards, and his advice to the General to re-visit this province, he had been actuated, like Casquin, by a secret desire to revenge himself upon an ancient enemy. The province of Anilco and that of Guachoya were in continual hostility; but the former had, for some time, had the advantage, and had brought off many trophies gained in ambush, surprises, and midnight marauds; the mode in which the savages carried on their warfare.

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 29.

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On entering the conquered village, the first thought of the warriors of Guachoya, was to attack the sepulchres of the Caciques. They displaced the heads of their countrymen stuck up round the gate, replacing them with those of the enemy. They stripped the sepulchre of all the trophies, of scalps, and banners, taken from the nation in battle; carried off all the relics and ornaments of the dead, threw down their coffins, and scattered about their bones, as had been done on a former occasion. Then ranging through the village, they massacred all they met, being chiefly old men, women and children, inflicting the most horrible barbarities.

In all this they acted in such fury and haste, that the mischief was effected almost before De Soto was aware of it. He put an end to the carnage as speedily as possible; reprimanded the Cacique severely, forbade any one to set fire to a house, or injure an Indian, under pain of death, and hastened to leave the village; taking care that the Indian allies should be the first to pass the river, and none remain behind to do mischief.

His precautions were all ineffectual. He had scarce disembarked and marched a league, when, on looking back, he saw a great smoke arising from the village, and found that several of the houses were in flames. In fact, the warriors of Guachoya, being

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deterred from open hostility, had secretly placed coals among the straw roofs of the houses. These being parched with the summer heat, easily took fire, and sprang into a blaze.

The Governor would have returned to extinguish the flames, but at this instant he saw many Indians of the neighbourhood running towards the village; so, leaving it to their care, he continued his march, deeply annoyed at having his friendly intentions towards Anilco thus defeated, but concealing his anger, lest he should likewise make an enemy of his crafty ally.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, p. 1. lib. 5. c. 6. Herrera. Decad 7. lib. 7. c. 3.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

Difficulties with the Cacique of Quigualtanqui. Illness and death of De Soto.

On taking up his quarters again in the village of Guachoya, the Governor set to work with his usual energy and perseverance, to construct the two brigantines. He ordered the necessary timber to be cut; collected all the ropes and cordage that he could find in the village or the neighbourhood, to serve for rigging; employed the Indians to gather for him resin and gums from pines and other trees; and caused all the spikes and nails saved from the old piraguas, put in order, and an additional quantity made. He had already, in his own mind, selected from among his most faithful and trusty followers, the officers and men who were to embark in the expedition; with the residue of his army, amounting to about five hundred men and fifty horses, he intended to await their return. While, therefore, he urged the building of the brigantines, he cast his eyes about in search of some plentiful region, where he could be sure of subsistence for his army, during the absence of the envoys.

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Having heard much concerning the fertility of the great province already mentioned, named Quigualtanqui, which lay on the opposite side of the Mississippi, he sent a party of horse and foot to explore it. The river here was about a mile in width, seventeen fathoms deep, and very rapid; having both shores thickly inhabited.* Collecting all the canoes of the village, and fastening the larger ones two and two together, he caused the horses to be passed over in them, while the infantry crossed on the others. They scoured the province of Quigualtanqui, and visited many hamlets, and especially the principal one, immediately opposite to Guachoya, containing five hundred houses. Every where, however, the habitations were deserted; the inhabitants having fled, or hid themselves. The scouting party, therefore, returned, without having effected any thing, but with glowing accounts of the fertility and evident populousness of the province.

These favourable reports determined De Soto to cross the river with his troops, as soon as the brigantines should be despatched, and to establish his head quarters in the chief town of Quigualtanqui; there to pass the summer and winter that must intervene before the return of his envoys.

* Portuguese Relation, c. 29.

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To his infinite chagrin, however, a violent hostility was manifested on the part of the Cacique Quigualtanqui. That Chieftain, who was of a haughty character and of great power, was extremely tenacious of his territorial sway. He was incensed at the inroad of the Spanish scouting party, and sent messengers to De Soto, swearing by the sun and moon, to wage a war of extermination on him and his people, should any of them dare again to put foot within his boundaries.*

At an earlier date a message of this kind would have been answered by De Soto by an inroad into the Cacique's dominions; but his spirits were gradually failing him. He had brooded over his past error, in abandoning the sea coast, until he was sick at heart; and as he saw the perils of his situation increasing, new and powerful enemies continually springing up around him, while his scanty force was daily diminishing, he became anxious for the preservation of the residue of his followers, and to avoid all further warfare. He sent an Indian messenger, therefore, to the chieftain, inviting him to friendship. He availed himself of an Indian superstition with respect to himself, and informed the Chieftain that he was the son of the Sun; the luminary which the natives professed to worship.

† Alonzo de Carmona.—Garcilaso de la Vega, p. 1, lib. 5, c. 6.

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That as such, he had received the homage of the Caciques of all the provinces through which he had passed. He invited Quigualtanqui to come and pay him like reverence; promising to take him into especial favour, and to reward him with inestimable gifts.

In the mean time, the melancholy which had long preyed upon the spirits of De Soto; the incessant anxiety of mind and fatigue of body, added perhaps to the influence of climate, brought on a slow fever, which at length confined him to his bed.

In the midst of his illness, he received a reply, by his own messenger, from Quigualtanqui. That haughty Cacique observed that if what he pretended were true, and he was really the son of the Sun, he might prove the fact, by drying up the great river; in which case, he should be ready to come over and pay him homage. If he could not do so, he must know that Quigualtanqui, being the greatest Chieftain in the land, visited nobody; but received visits and tribute from all. If, therefore, he wished to see him, he must cross the river to his country. If he came as a friend, he should be received as such; if as an enemy, he would find him and his men ready for battle, and resolved never to yield an inch of ground.*

* Portuguese Relation, c. 29.

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This taunting reply vexed the spirit of De Soto, and augmented his malady. It was still more irritated by the information that the Cacique was endeavouring to form a league of all the neighbouring Chieftains against him; and he dreaded that some new disasters might occur to delay if not defeat his plans. From his sick bed, however, he maintained his usual vigilance for the safety of his army. The sentinels were doubled, and a rigid watch maintained. Each night the cavalry mounted guard in the suburbs of the village, with bridle in hand, ready for action; while two troopers were constantly upon the patrol, alternately visiting the outposts, and detachments of cross-bow men kept watch upon the river in canoes.*

The schemes, and labours, and anxieties of De Soto, however, were rapidly drawing to a close; day by day his malady increased upon him, and his fever rose to such a height, that he felt convinced his last hour was at hand. He prepared for death with the steadfastness of a soldier, and all accounts agree, with the piety of a devout Catholic.

He made his will almost in cypher, for want of sufficient paper: then calling together the officers and soldiers of most note, he nominated, as his successor to the titles and commands of Governor and Cap-

*Portuguese Relation, c. 29.

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tain General of the kingdom and provinces of Florida, Luis de Moscoso de Alvarado; the same whom, in the province of Chicaza, he had deposed from the office of Master of the Camp; and he charged them, on the part of the Emperor, and in consideration of the qualities and virtues of Luis de Moscoso, to obey him in the above capacities, until other orders should be received from government. To all this he required them to take an oath with due form and solemnity.

When this was done, the dying chieftain called to him, by two and two, and three and three, the most noble of his army, and after them he ordered that the soldiery should enter, twenty and twenty, and thirty and thirty, and of all of them he took his last farewell, with great tenderness on his own part, and many tears on theirs. He charged them to convert the natives to the Catholic faith, and to augment the power of the crown of Spain, being himself cut off by death from the accomplishment of these great aims. He thanked them for the affection and fidelity which they had evinced, in fearlessly following his fortunes through such great trials, and expressed his deep regret that it was not in his power to shew his gratitude, by rewards such as they merited. He begged the forgiveness of all whom he had offended, and finally, entreated them, in the most affectionate

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manner, to be peaceful and loving to one another. His fever raged violently, and continued to increase until the seventh day, when, having confessed his sins with much humility and contrition, he expired.*

Thus died Hernando de Soto; one of the boldest, and the bravest of the many brave leaders who figured in the first discoveries, and distinguished themselves in the wild warfare of the Western World. How proud and promising had been the commencement of his career! how humble and hapless its close! Cut off in the very vigour and manhood of his days, for he was but forty-two years old when he expired; perishing in a strange and savage land, amid the din and tumult of a camp, and with merely a few rough soldiers to attend him; for nearly all were engaged in the preparations making for their escape in this perilous situation.

Hernando de Soto was well calculated to com-

* "He died," says the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, in his Chronicle, "like a Catholic Christian, imploring mercy of the most Holy Trinity; relying on the protection of the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord, and the intercession of the Virgin, and of all the Celestial Court, and in the faith of the Roman Church.

"With these words, repeating them many times, resigned his soul to God this magnanimous, and never-conquered cavalier, worthy of great dignities and titles, and deserving a better historian than a rude Indian."

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mand the independent and chivalric spirits of which his army was composed; for, while his ideas of military discipline were very strict, and he punished every breach of military duty, all other offences he easily pardoned. No one was more prompt to notice and reward all soldier-like merit. He is said to have been courteous and engaging in his manners, patient and persevering under difficulties, encouraging his followers by his quiet endurance of suffering. In his own person, he was valiant in the extreme, and of such vigour of arm, that wherever he passed in battle, he is said to have hewn himself a lane through the thickest of the enemy. Some of his biographers have accused him of cruelty towards the poor Indians; but, according to the Inca's account, we find him, in general, humane and merciful; striving to conciliate the natives by presents and kind messages, and only resorting to violent means where the safety of himself and followers were at stake. A striking contrast to his humanity, in this respect, will be presented in the conduct of his successor, Luis de Moscoso.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

The burial of De Soto. The Cacique sends two young Indians to be sacrificed to his manes. What Luis de Moscoso said in reply. Disposal of the Governor's effects.

1542. The death of the Governor left his followers overwhelmed with grief; they felt as if made orphans by his loss, for they looked up to him as a father: and they sorrowed the more, because they could not give him a proper sepulture, nor perform the solemn obsequies due to the remains of a Captain and commander so much beloved and honoured.

They feared to bury him publicly, and with becoming ceremonials, lest the Indians should discover the place of his interment, and should outrage and insult his remains, as they had done those of other Spaniards; tearing them from their graves, dismembering them, and hanging them piecemeal from the trees. If they had shewn such indignities to the bodies of the common soldiers, how much greater would they inflict upon that of their Governor and commander. Besides, De Soto had impressed them

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with a very exalted opinion of his prudence and valour; and the Spaniards, therefore, dreaded, lest finding out the death of their leader, they might be induced to revolt, and fall upon their handful of troops.*

For these reasons, they buried him in the dead of night, with sentinels posted to keep the natives at a distance, that the sad ceremony might be safe from the observation of their spies. The place chosen for his sepulture, was one of many pits, broad and deep, in a plain, near to the village, from whence the Indians had taken earth for their buildings. Here he was interred, in silence and in secret, with many tears of the priests and cavaliers, who were present at his mournful obsequies. The better to deceive the Indians, and prevent their suspecting the place of his interment, they gave out, on the following day, that the Governor was recovering from his malady, and, mounting their horses, they assumed an appearance of rejoicing. That all traces of the grave might be lost, they caused much water to be sprinkled over it, and upon the surrounding plain, as if to prevent the dust being raised by their horses. They then scoured the plain, and galloped about the pits, and over the very grave of their commander; but it was

* Portuguese Relation, c. 30.

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difficult, under this cover of pretended gayety, to conceal the real sadness of their hearts.

With all these precautions, they soon found out that the Indians suspected, not only the death of the Governor, but the place where he lay buried; for in passing by the pits, they would stop, look round attentively on all sides, talk with one another, and make signs with their chins and their eyes toward the spot where the body was interred.

The Spaniards perceiving this, and feeling assured that the Indians would search the whole plain, until they found the body, determined to disinter it, and place it where it would be secure from molestation. No place appeared better suited to the purpose than the Mississippi; but first they wished to ascertain whether there was sufficient depth to hide the body effectually.

Accordingly, Juan de Añasco, and other officers, taking with them a mariner, embarked one evening in a canoe, under pretence of fishing, and amusing themselves; and sounding the river where it was a quarter of a league wide, they found, in the mid-channel, a depth of nineteen fathoms. Here, therefore, they determined to deposit the body.

As there was no stone in the neighbourhood wherewith to sink it, they cut down an evergreen oak, and made an excavation in one side, of the size

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of a man. On the following night, with all the silence possible, they disinterred the body, and placed it in the trunk of the oak, nailing planks over the aperture. The rustic coffin was then conveyed to the centre of the river, where, in presence of several priests and cavaliers, it was committed to the stream, and they beheld it sink to the bottom; shedding many tears over this second funeral rite, and commending anew the soul of the good cavalier to heaven.*

The Indians, soon perceiving that the Governor was not with the army, nor buried, as they had supposed, demanded of the Spaniards where he was. The general reply prepared for the occasion, was, that God had sent for him, to communicate to him great things, which he was commanded to perform, as soon as he should return to earth. With this answer, the Indians remained apparently content.†

The Cacique, however, who believed him to be dead, sent two handsome young Indians to Moscoso, with the message, that it was the custom of his country, when any great prince died, to put to death some persons to attend him, and serve him on his journey to the land of spirits; and for that purpose, these young men presented themselves. Luis de

* Garcilaso de la Vega, part 1, lib. 4, c. 8.

† Alonso de Carmona and Juan Coles. Garcilaso de la Vega, p. 1, lib. 5, c. 8.

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Moscoso replied, that the Governor was not dead, but gone to heaven, and had chosen some of his christian followers to attend him there; he therefore prayed Guachoya to receive again the two Indian youths, and to renounce so barbarous a custom for the future. He accordingly set the Indians at liberty on the spot, and ordered them to return to their homes; but one of them refused to go, saying that he would not serve a master who had condemned him to death without a cause, but would ever follow one who had saved his life.*

De Soto's effects, consisting in all of two slaves, three horses, and seven hundred swine, were disposed of at public sale. The slaves and horses were sold for three thousand crowns each; the money to be paid by the purchaser on the first discovery of any gold or silver mines, or as soon as he should be proprietor of a plantation in Florida. Should neither of these events come to pass, the buyer pledged himself to pay the money within a year. The swine were sold in like manner, at two hundred crowns a piece. Henceforth, the greater number of the soldiers possessed this desirable article of food, which they ate of on all days save Fridays, Saturdays, and the eves of festivals, which they rigidly observed, according to the customs of the Roman Catholics.

* Portuguese Relation, c. 30.

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This abstinence they were not able to practise before, as they were frequently without meat for two or three months together, and when they found any, were glad to devour it, without regard to days.*

* Portuguese Relation, c. 30.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

The Spaniards, under the command of Luis de Moscoso, commence their march to the westward. Arrival at the province of Chaguate, where they find salt.

1542. After their first grief for the loss of their illustrious commander, many in the army began to doubt whether it was really a calamity. Some even thought it matter of rejoicing; for many of the officers and soldiers had long been disheartened and discontented by their toils and sufferings, and the disappointment of their expectations of golden spoils. Nothing but their respect for De Soto, and the sway he maintained over them, had prevented their abandoning so disastrous a country. They were now in hopes that the new Governor, who was devoutly inclined, would choose rather to seek rest and repose in some Christian land, than to follow out the schemes of De Soto.

Luis de Moscoso immediately called a council, to deliberate upon what was to be done; and it was determined, by the common consent of the

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leading men, to leave their present position as soon as possible. Moscoso requested each officer to hand in his written opinion, whether they should follow the course of the river, or strike across the country to the westward.

Juan de Añasco, the contador, was for carrying out the views and plans of De Soto. He not only opposed the idea of suddenly abandoning the country, but offered to guide the army in a brief space of time, to the frontiers of Mexico: for he piqued himself upon his knowledge of geography, and presumed by its aid, to deliver his comrades out of all their difficulties.

The proposition of Añasco derived support from the recollection of certain rumours which the Indians had brought, some months before, that not far to the westward, there were other Spaniards, who were going about conquering the country. These rumours, being brought to mind, were now adopted as truths; and it was concluded that those Spaniards to the westward must have sallied forth from Mexico, to conquer new kingdoms; and as, according to the account of the Indians, they could not be far distant, it was determined to march with all speed in that direction, and join them in their career of conquest.

On the fourth or fifth of June, the army set out

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on its march, under the command of its new Governor and Captain-General, Luis de Moscoso; directing its course westward, determining to turn neither to the right nor the left. By keeping in that direction, they supposed that they must arrive at the confines of Mexico: not perceiving that according to their geography, they were in a much higher latitude than that of New Spain.

A young Indian, sixteen or seventeen years of age, finely formed and handsome in countenance, followed the Spaniards of his own accord, when they left this province. The circumstance was mentioned to Luis de Moscoso, from a suspicion that he might prove to be a spy. The General ordered the stripling to be brought before him, and, through his interpreters, demanded the cause of his leaving his parents, his relations and friends, to follow a people whom he did not know? "Senior," replied he, "I am poor, and an orphan; my parents died when I was very young, and left me destitute. An Indian chief of my native village, a near relative of the Cacique, took compassion on me, led me to his home, and brought me up among his children. When you left the village, he was grievously sick, and his life was despaired of. His wife and children determined that, in case he should die, I should be buried with him alive; because, they said,

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that my master had cherished and tenderly loved me, and that I must therefore go along with him, to serve him in the world whither he had gone. Now, although I am deeply grateful to him for having sheltered and fostered me, and love his memory, yet I have no desire to share his grave. Seeing no other way to escape this death, but by going with the strangers, I preferred being their slave to being buried alive. This, and this alone, is the cause of my coming."*

The Spaniards perceived, by this and the instance already mentioned, that the superstitious custom of burying alive the wives and servants with the dead body of the master, was observed in this country, as in all the other regions yet discovered in the new world.

After leaving Guachoya, the Spaniards passed through the province of Catalte; then across a desert country, to another province called Chaguate, where they arrived on the twentieth of June. The Cacique had already visited the Spaniards, during the lifetime of De Soto, when quartered at Utiangue, and now resumed a friendly intercourse. Near the chief village of this province, they found the Indians busily employed in making salt at a saline spring, like a fountain head. Here the troops

† Garcilaso de la Vega, lib. 5, part 2, c. 2.

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remained six days, supplying themselves with this necessary article. They then continued their march westward, in quest of the province of Aguacay, which they were told lay at the distance of three days journey.

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CHAPTER XXX.

Disappearance of Diego de Guzman. Cause of his desertion.

1542. On the second day of their march, the Governor was informed that one of their number, named Diego de Guzman, was missing. He immediately ordered a halt, and entered into a diligent investigation of the matter; apprehending that Guzman might have been detained or murdered by the Indians.

This Diego de Guzman was one of the many young Spanish cavaliers, who had joined this expedition with romantic notions of conquest, and glory, and golden gain. He was of a good family, and rich, and enlisted in the enterprise in brilliant style; with costly raiment, splendid armour and weapons, and three fine horses. Unluckily, he was passionately fond of play, and had but too frequent opportunities of indulging in it; for the Spaniards passed much of their leisure time in their encampments in gambling, as is usual with soldiery, and especially with young hap-hazard adventurers, such as formed a great part of this band of discoverers.

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In the conflagration of Mauvila, all their cards were burnt; but they made others of parchment, painted with admirable skill; and, as they could not make a sufficient supply for the number of gamesters, the packs went the rounds and were lent from one to the other for limited times. With these they gambled under the trees, in their wigwams, or on the river banks; or wherever they might have any idle hours to while away.

Diego de Guzman was one of the keenest; but a run of ill luck had gradually stripped him of all that he had brought to the army, or captured on the march; and but four days before the march, he had lost his clothes, his arms, a horse, and a female captive, recently taken in the course of a foray. De Guzman had honourably paid all his losses, until it came to his captive, but here there was a struggle between pride and affection. The girl was but eighteen years of age, and extremely beautiful; so that he had conceived a passion for her. He had put off the winner, therefore, with the assurance that he would give her up to him in the course of four or five days. De Guzman had been seen in the camp the day before the march: he was now missing, and the girl had disappeared likewise. On hearing all these circumstances, the Governor concluded that, ashamed

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of having lost his arms and steed, and unwilling to give up his Indian beauty, he had escaped with her to her people. He was confirmed in this suspicion, on hearing that the female was the daughter of the Cacique of Chaguate.

The General now summoned before him four Chiefs of the province, who were among his escort, and ordered them to cause the Spaniard who had deserted to be sought out and brought to the camp; telling them, that unless he was produced, he should conclude that he had been treacherously murdered, and should revenge his death.

The chiefs, terrified for their own safety, sent messengers in all speed. They returned with the account that De Guzman was with the Cacique, who was feasting him and treating him with all possible kindness and distinction, and that he could not be prevailed upon to return to the army.

The Governor refused all credit to this story, and persisted in his surmises that De Guzman had been murdered. Upon this, one of the Chiefs turned to the Governor with a proud and lofty air. "We are not men," said he, "who would tell you falsehoods. If you doubt the truth of what the messengers have said, send one of us four to bring you some testimonial of the fact; and if he bring not back the Spaniard, or some satisfactory proof that

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he is alive and well, the three of us that remain in your hands will answer for his loss with our lives."

The proposition pleased the Governor and his officers; and after consultation, Baltazar de Gallegos, who was a friend and townsman of De Guzman, was instructed to write to him, condemning the step he had taken, and exhorting him to return and perform his duty as became a cavalier; assuring him that his horse and arms should be restored to him, and others given to him in case of need. An accompanying message was sent to the Cacique threatening him with fire and sword, unless he delivered up the fugitive.

The following day the messenger returned, bringing back the letter of Gallegos, with the name of De Guzman written upon it in charcoal; a proof that he was alive. He sent not a word, however, in reply to the contents of the letter; and the messenger said that he had no intention nor wish to rejoin the army.

The Cacique, on his own part, sent word, assuring the Governor that he had used no force to detain Diego de Guzman in his territories, nor should he use any to compel him to depart; but rather as a son-in-law, who had restored to him a beloved daughter, he would treat him with all possible honour and kindness, and would do the same to any of

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the strangers who chose to remain with him. If, for having done his duty in this matter, the Governor thought proper to lay waste his lands and destroy his people, he had the power in his hands, and could do as he pleased.*

The Governor, seeing that Diego de Guzman would not return, and feeling that the Cacique was justifiable in not delivering him up, abandoned all further attempt to recover him, and set the Indian Chiefs at liberty, who continued, however, to attend him until he reached the frontier.

* Garcilaso de la Vega, p. 1, lib. 5. c. 2.

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CHAPTER XXXI.

The army arrives at Naguatex—a severe brush with the natives—imminent peril of two troopers and four foot soldiers. Severe treatment of the Indian captives. Interview between the Cacique Naguatex and Moscoso. The Spaniards perplexed by a phenomenon.

1542. The next province traversed by the Spaniards was named Aguacay, and abounded with salt; they encamped one evening on the borders of a lake, the waters of which were strongly impregnated with it. The Indians formed the salt into small cakes, by means of earthen moulds, and used it as an article of traffic. At the chief village of the province, the Spaniards fancied, from the replies of the inhabitants to their questions, that they had some knowledge of the South Sea; but it is probable they were deceived by the blunders of their interpreters.

After leaving Aguacay, they crossed the province of Maye, and on the twentieth of July, encamped beside a pleasant wood, on the confines of the province of Naguatex. They had scarce come to a

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halt, when a body of Indians were observed hovering at a distance. A party of horse immediately sallied forth, and dashing into the midst of them, killed six, and brought two prisoners to the camp. They confessed that they were a scouting party, sent by the Cacique to reconnoitre the strangers, and that Naguatex himself was at hand with his warriors, aided by two neighbouring chieftains. While yet talking, the enemy appeared in two battalions, and assailed the camp in two places, but were soon put to flight. The horse pursued them, and fell into an ambush which had been laid for them by two other bands, and these they equally succeeded in routing.

In the mean time, two troopers and four foot soldiers, who had pursued the first assailants too hotly, were surrounded, and asailed on all sides. The troopers behaved manfully, wheeling round their more exposed companions, rushing upon the Indians with their horses, and keeping them at bay with their spears; in the mean time they all called out lustily for aid. Their cries reached the camp. Twelve troopers came galloping to their assistance: the Indians fled at their approach: many of them were slain, and one taken prisoner. Moscoso immediately ordered that his nose and right arm should be cut off, and he sent him thus cruelly mutilated to

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Naguatex, with a threat that he would next day enter his country with fire and sword.

The ensuing day Moscoso pushed forward to execute his threats, but a large river intervened between him and the residence of the Cacique. He halted on the banks, and beheld a powerful force collected on the opposite side, to oppose his passage. Not knowing the ford, and several of the men and horses being wounded, he took counsel in his wrath, and drawing back about a quarter of a league from the river, encamped near a village, by a clear and beautiful wood, preferring the open air to any habitation, as the weather was calm and pleasant. Here he remained a few days, to give his troops time to recover from their wounds and fatigues. In the mean time, parties of horse explored the river, forded it in two places, in spite of the opposition of the natives, and found a populous and abundant country on the other side.

The Governor having now had time to recover from the anger caused by the rough assault of the Cacique of Naguatex, sent an Indian with a message to him, proffering him pardon for the past, on condition of repentance and submission; but, otherwise, denouncing exterminating vengeance. The message had the desired effect. The Indian returned, bringing a promise from the Cacique that

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he would make his appearance the next day. On the following morning, a great number of the principal subjects of Naguatex came to the camp, announced that the Cacique was at hand, and having apparently taken note of the Governor's looks, and disposition of his men, returned to give an account of the same to their Chieftain. At length the Cacique was seen approaching at a distance. A great band of his principal men marched two and two in front, all weeping and lamenting, as if in contrition for the past. When the head couple had arrived in presence of the Governor, they all halted, fell back on each side, and formed a lane, up which the Cacique advanced. Bending in a supplicating manner before the Governor, he begged forgiveness for what he had done, attributing his rash hostility to the bad counsels of one of his brothers, who had fallen in the fight. He acknowledged the Spaniards as immortal, the Governor as invincible, and concluded by offering his obedience and services. Moscoso accepted his proffered allegiance, and dismissed him with assurances of friendship. Four days afterwards he broke up his camp and marched to the river side, but was surprised to find it swollen and impassable, although it was summer time, and no rain had fallen for a month. The Indians, however, assured him that this swelling

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of the river often happened without rain, and generally during the increase of the moon.

The Spaniards, perplexed at this phenomenon, and little acquainted with the great extent of these rivers, and the sudden effects of rain among the distant mountains and extensive prairies where they take their rise, surmised that the swellings, during the waxing of the moon, might be caused by the influx of the sea into the river, although none of the Indians had any knowledge of the sea.

At the end of eight days the river had subsided sufficiently to be fordable. The army then crossed; but, on coming to the town of the Cacique, found it abandoned. The Governor encamped in the open fields, and sent for the Cacique to come to him and furnish him with a guide. Naguatex, however, was afraid to venture to the camp. Upon this the ire of Moscoso was again kindled, and he sent out two Captains with troops of horse, to burn down the villages and make captives of the inhabitants. The country was soon wrapped in smoke and flame, and several Indians were captured. The Cacique was again brought to terms, and sent several of his principal people as hostages, and three guides who understood the language of the countries the Spaniards were to march through. The Governor was once more pacified, and set forward on his western

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march. Such were the rough circumstances that attended the sojourn of the Spaniards in the province of Naguatex.*

* The name of this province is spelled in the same manner (Naguatex) both in the Spanish and Portuguese Narrations. It has been identified with Nachitoches, by some modern writers, who suppose the village of the Cacique to have stood on the site of the present town of that name. It appears to the author, however, that the modern Nachitoches lies to the south of the route of Moscoso, though it may have been called after the old Indian village, situated more to the northward. It is almost impossible to identify any of the places visited by the Spaniards in their wild wanderings west of the Mississippi.

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CHAPTER XXXII.

Vague tidings of Europeans to the West. Wandering in a wilderness. Treachery of an old Indian guide, and his fate. The hunting grounds of the Far West.

1542. The army now pressed forward, by forced marches, more than a hundred leagues, through various provinces, more or less populous and fertile; but some of them extremely barren, and almost uninhabited. The Portuguese narrator of the expedition gives the names of some of these provinces, such as Missobone, Lacane, Mandacao, Socatino, and Guasco. In one of the provinces, they observed wooden crosses placed on the tops of the houses, and were struck with the sight of this Christian emblem. They began to flatter themselves that they were approaching the confines of New Spain, and made incessant inquiries, in every province that they entered, whether the inhabitants knew any thing of Christian people to the west. Where all intelligence had to pass from mouth to mouth, through several interpreters, indifferently acquainted with each other's

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language, and finally to be communicated by an Indian lad, who was but moderately versed in Spanish, it is easy to perceive what vague and erroneous ideas must have been imparted. Some of the natives, it is probable, wilfully deceived the Spaniards; others misunderstood the kind of people about whom they were inquiring. In this way they received tidings, as they thought, of Europeans that had been seen farther to the west; and whom they persuaded themselves were parties of discoverers, making incursions from New Spain. They brightened up with the hopes of meeting with some party of the kind, or at any rate, of coming to regions subjugated and colonized by their countrymen, where they would no longer be in danger of perishing in a trackless wilderness, but might choose either to abide securely in the new world, or return to their native country.

Thus they went on, from place to place, lured by false hopes and idle tales. When they reached places where they had been assured they would come upon the traces of white men, the inhabitants declared their utter ignorance of any people of the kind. In the transports of vexation and disappointment, Moscoso would order the poor savages to be put to the rack. This only served to extort from them false replies, suited to his wishes, but which

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led him and his army to farther unprofitable wandering and additional disappointment.*

Moscoso and his followers, moreover, suffered extremely for the want of intelligent and faithful guides. Sometimes they erred from misinterpretation of the routes; at other times, they were purposely led astray. When they had journeyed far to the west, they came to a vast uninhabited region, where they wandered for many days, until their provisions were exhausted, and they had nothing to appease their hunger but herbs and roots. To their great dismay, also, they found that an old Indian warrior, who had been furnished by a Cacique as a guide, was leading them in a circle, heading from time to time to different points of the compass. Upon this, Moscoso, suspecting his fidelity, ordered him to be tied to a tree, and the dogs to be let loose upon him. One of them sprang upon him instantly, and began to shake him. The Indian, in his terror, confessed that he had been ordered by his Cacique to bewilder and lose them in uninhabited deserts, but offered to take them, in three days, to a populous country to the west. Moscoso, however, listening only to his indignation at this treachery, again ordered the dogs to be let loose, who, ravenous with hunger, tore the unfortunate wretch to pieces.

* Garcilaso de la Vega. L. 5, p. 1, c. 2.

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Having in this shocking manner gratified their passion, the Spaniards found themselves worse off than before, for they had no one to guide them, having given permission to the other Indians, who had brought the supplies, to return home. In this dilemma, they followed the directions of their victim, by marching directly westward; thus giving credit, after his death, to what they disbelieved while he was living.

They travelled three days, suffering excessively for want of food. Fortunately the forests were clear and open; had they been so dense as those through which they had formerly passed, they would have perished with hunger before they could make their way through them. They journeyed always to the westward, and at the end of three days, descried, from a rising ground, the signs of human habitations. The inhabitants, however, fled to the woods, on their approach, and they found the country meagre and sterile. The villages differed from the past, the houses being scattered about the fields in groups of four and five, rudely constructed, and resembling the hovels erected in melon fields in Spain to guard the fruit, rather than habitable houses. In these cabins they found abundance of fresh buffalo meat, with which they appeased their hunger. There were many buffalo hides also, re-

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cently flayed; but the Spaniards could never meet with the living animals. From the abundant traces of horned cattle thus found in the habitations, they called this the Province of the Vaqueros, or Herdsmen.*

* It is evident that the Spaniards were on the hunting grounds of the Far West—the great buffalo prairies. It is probable that the scattered and slight wigwams thus visited, were mere hunting camps.

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

Feats of individual prowess of the Indians of the Far West.

1542. The Indians of the Far West have always been noted for their gallant and martial bearing, and their proneness to feats of individual prowess and bravado. In their wandering through this wild hunting region, the Spaniards had frequent instances of the kind, two or three of which are worthy of especial notice. In the course of their march through the province of Los Vaqueros, they encamped one afternoon in an open plain. The Spaniards stretched themselves on the ground to repose, while their Indian attendants prepared their repast. While thus reclining, they observed an Indian warrior sally out of an adjacent wood and approach the camp. He was gaily painted; had a bow in his hand, a quiver of arrows over his right shoulder, and waving plumes upon his head.

The Spaniards seeing him advance alone, and peacefully, imagined that he was charged with some message from his Cacique to the Governor, and

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allowed him to draw nigh. He came within fifty paces of a group of soldiers, who were conversing together; then, suddenly fixing an arrow in his bow, he sent it in the midst of them.

The Spaniards seeing him bend his bow, some sprang aside, others threw themselves upon the ground. The arrow whistled by without touching them, but flying beyond, where five or six female Indians were under a tree, preparing dinner for their masters, it struck one in the shoulders, and passing through her body, buried itself in the bosom of another; they both fell and expired. The savage then turned, and fled with surprising speed to the woods. The Spaniards beat the alarm and shouted after him. The Captain, Baltazar de Gallegos, being by chance on horseback, heard the shout, and saw the savage flying; suspecting the cause, he gave chase, overtook him close to the wood, and transfixed him with his lance.

Three days after this, the army halted for a day to repose in a beautiful plain, of the same province. While thus indulging, they saw, about ten in the morning, two Indian warriors approaching across the plain. They were fine looking fellows, decorated with lofty plumes, bearing their bows in their hands, and their quivers at their backs. They stalked to within two hundred paces of the camp, and then

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began to walk round a large nut tree, not side by side, but circling in opposite directions, so as to pass each other, and guard one another's backs. In this way they kept on all day, without deigning to take any notice of the Negroes, Indians, women and boys who occasionally passed near them, bringing water and wood.

The Spaniards understood from this, that they came not for the domestics but for them, and they forthwith reported to the Governor what they had observed. He ordered that no soldier should go out to them, but that they should be left alone as madmen.

The Indians continued their circumvolutions about the tree, waiting patiently, it would seem, for some of the Spaniards to take up this singular challenge. It was near sunset, when a company of horse, who had been out since morning scouring the country, returned. Their quarters were near the place where this extraordinary scene was acting, and observing it, they asked, "what Indians are these?" Having learnt the order of the Governor, that they should be unmolested as two madmen, it was obeyed by all except a headlong soldier named Juan Paez, who, eager to exhibit his valour, exclaimed, "a pest upon them, here's one madder than they, who will cure their madness!" So say-

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ing, he spurred towards them. When the Indians saw but a single Spaniard advancing to attack them, the one who was nearest to Paez stepped forth to receive him, and the other separating, placed himself under a tree; thus manifesting a wish to fight man to man, and disregarding the advantage that the Spaniard had in being mounted. The soldier spurred upon the Indian at full speed to bear him down with the shock. His adversary waited with an arrow in his bow, until he came within shot, when he sped his shaft. It struck Juan Paez in the muscular part of the left arm, passed through it and through both sides of a sleeve of mail, and remained crossed in the wound. The arm dropped powerless, the reins slipped from the hand, and the horse feeling them fall, stopped of a sudden, as horses are often trained to do.

The companions of Juan Paez, who had not yet alighted, seeing his peril, galloped to his rescue. The Indian, not choosing to encounter such odds, fled to a neighbouring wood, but before they could reach it were overtaken and lanced to death. In this affair the savages certainly showed a spirit of chivalry, and a punctilio as to the laws of the duel, which merited a better return at the hands of Spanish cavaliers.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, lib. 5, p. 2, c. 4.

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

The Spaniards come in sight of high mountains to the West. Exploring parties sent out to discover the country. The report they bring back. Moscoso calls a council of his officers. Their determination.

1542. After traversing the wild waste of country which the Spaniards called the Province of Los Vaqueros, they came to a river called Daycao, which was a favourite hunting resort of the Indians; great quantities of deer feeding along its banks. They had been told that the country beyond it was inhabited; and Moscoso sent out a party of horse to cross the river, and beat up the opposite banks. They found a village, consisting of a few miserable hovels, and captured two of the inhabitants; but none of the interpreters could understand their language.

The Spaniards now saw to the west a series of mountains and forests; and learnt that the country was without inhabitants. Their hearts began to fail them. The hunger and toil they had already experienced, rendered them loth to penetrate these savage regions. The Governor, therefore, determined

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to remain encamped, and to send out light parties to explore the country to the west. Three bands of horsemen accordingly set off, each in a different direction; and penetrated to the distance of thirty leagues. They found the country sterile, thinly peopled, and it appeared worse and worse the further they proceeded. They captured some of the inhabitants, who assured them, that farther on, it was still more destitute: the natives did not live in villages, nor dwell in houses; neither did they cultivate the soil, but were a wandering people, roving in bands, gathering fruits and herbs, and roots of spontaneous growth, and depending occasionally upon hunting and fishing for subsistence: passing from place to place, according as the seasons were favourable to their pursuits.*

At the end of fifteen days, the exploring parties were all back again in the camp, bringing nearly the same accounts. Their united reports brought the Governor completely to a stand. To prosecute his march to New Spain through such wildernesses as were described to him, would be to run the risk of losing himself and his troops in famishing and trackless deserts. He now recollected what had been related by Alvar Nuñez, of races of Indians

* This description answers to the character and habits of the Pawnees, Comanches, and other tribes of the Far West.

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that he had met with, unsettled in their abode, wandering about like the wild Arabs, feeding on roots and herbs, and the produce of the chase; and he fancied such savage hordes roved about the country before him. Indeed, it was probable that all the rumours he had heard of Christians seen by the Indians, might relate to Alvar Nuñez and his companions, who, on their way to New Spain, after their shipwreck with Pamphilo de Narvaez, had passed as captives from tribe to tribe of the inhabitants of these lands. It is true, they kept near the sea coast, far to the south of the track of Moscoso, but the fame of such wonderful strangers might have penetrated to the interior; for reports are carried to vast distances among Indian tribes. The crosses, also which Moscoso had observed in one of the provinces through which he had passed, might have been put up by the Indians as talismans, in consequence of the fame of apparently miraculous cures made by Alvar Nuñez and his men, who always carried a cross in their hands when they visited the sick, and made the sign of the cross over their patients.

The delusive reports, therefore, of Christians to the west, which had encouraged the Spaniards to proceed, had now died away. They had nothing but savage wastes before them, infested by barbar-

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ous people, with whom it was impossible to keep up a friendly understanding for want of an interpreter. It was already the beginning of October; if they lingered much longer, the rains and snows of winter would cut off their return, and they might perish with cold and hunger. Moscoso was weary in soul and body, and longed to be in a place where his sleep would not be broken by continual alarms. He called a council, therefore, of his officers, and proposed that they should give up all farther progress to the west, make the best of their way back to the Mississippi, build vessels there, and descend that river to the ocean.

The proposition was by no means relished by some, who, notwithstanding all their sufferings and disappointments, had still a lingering hope of finding some country rich enough to repay them for all their toils. They represented that Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca had told the Emperor of his having come into a country where cotton grew, and where he saw gold, silver, and precious stones. That they had not yet come to those regions of which Alvar Nuñez spake, but might do so by keeping forward. Besides, they had actually met with cotton mantles and Torquoises at a province called Guasco, and had understood from the natives that they came from a country to the west; which was doubtless the

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country that Alvar Nuñez had spoken of. They were, therefore, for persisting in their desperate march westward; nay, some of them declared they would rather perish in the wilderness, than return beggared and miserable to Europe, from an expedition undertaken with such high and vaunting anticipations.

Sager councils, however, prevailed, and after much deliberation it was determined to retrace their steps to the Mississippi.

NOTE.—The march of Moscoso west of the Mississippi has been rendered from the Spanish and Portuguese accounts; but they vary so much on some points, and are so vague on others, and the regions to which they relate are so vast, and, until very recently, so little known, that it is next to impossible to trace the route of the wanderers with any thing approaching to precision. They evidently traversed the hunting grounds of the Far West, the range of the buffalo, and got upon the upper prairies, which, in many parts, are little better than deserts. The river Dacayo, which is only mentioned by the Portuguese narrator, has been supposed to be the 'Rio del Oro' of Cabeza de Vaca. He makes them return from the banks of this river; but the Spanish historian affirms that they saw great chains of mountains and forests to the west, which they understood were uninhabited. It has been conjectured that these were the skirts of the Rocky Mountains. As, according to the Portuguese account, they departed from the banks of the Mississippi for the Far West, on the fifth of June, and did not get back there until the beginning of December, they were six months on this march and countermarch, which, with all their haltings, would give them time to penetrate a great distance into the interior.

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CHAPTER XXXV.

Harassing march of the Spaniards. The trooper—his misadventure.

1542. The Spaniards had now a long and dreary march before them, with no novelty ahead to cheer them on, and a country to traverse, the savage inhabitants of which had been rendered hostile by their previous invasion, and its resources laid waste by their foraging parties. They endeavoured to remedy these disadvantages as much as possible by making a bend to the south, so as to avoid the desolate tracts they had recently traversed, and to find regions more abundant in provisions.

They journeyed by forced marches, and took every precaution not to provoke the Indians; the latter, however, were on the alert, and harassed them at all hours of day and night. Sometimes they concealed themselves in woods, by which the Spaniards had to pass; in the more open country they would lie upon the ground, covered by the tall grass and weeds, and as the soldiers, seeing no enemy, came carelessly along, the wily savages

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would suddenly spring up, discharge a shower of arrows, and immediately take to flight.

These assaults were so many and frequent, that one band would scarcely be repulsed from the vanguard, when another attacked the rear, and frequently the line of march was assailed in three or four places at the same time, with great loss and injury both of men and horses. In fact, it was in this province of Los Vaqueros that the Spaniards, without coming hand to hand with the enemy, received more injury than in any other through which they passed. This was especially the case in the course of the last day's march, when their route was extremely rough, through woods, and across streams and ravines, and other dangerous passes, peculiarly fit for ambush and surprise. Here the savages, who were well acquainted with the ground, had them at their mercy, waylaying them at every step, wounding Spaniards, and horses, and the Indian servants who accompanied the army.

The last of these assaults happened just before arriving at the place of encampment, as they crossed a brook overhung with trees and thickets. Just as one of the horsemen, named Sanjurge, was in the middle of the brook, an arrow shot from among the bushes on the bank, struck him in the rear, pierced his cuirass of mail, passed through the muscle of his

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right thigh, then through the saddle tree and paddings, and buried itself in the horse. The wounded animal sprang out of the brook, sallied forth upon the plain, and went on plunging and kicking to get clear of the arrow and his rider.

The comrades of Sanjurge hastened to his assistance. Finding him nailed, in a manner, to the saddle, and the army having halted to encamp hard by, they led him on horseback as he was, to his allotted quarters. Lifting him gently from his seat, they cut off the shaft of the arrow, between the saddle and the wound; after which, taking off the saddle, they found that the injury to the horse was but slight. What surprised them, however, was, that the shaft, which had penetrated through so many substances, was a mere reed, with the end hardened in the fire. Such was the vigour of arm with which these Indian archers plied their bows.

This Sanjurge had enjoyed a kind of charlatan reputation among the soldiers, for curing wounds with oil, wool, and certain words, which he called a charm. At the battle of Mauvila, however, all the oil and wool had been burnt, and Sanjurge's miraculous cures were at an end. His whole surgical skill being confined to his nostrum and charm, he was now fain to call in the aid of the surgeon to extract the head of an arrow which was lodged

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in his knee. The operation was so painful, however, that he railed at the surgeon for a bungler, and swore he would rather die than come again under his hands, and the latter replied that he might die and welcome, before he would have any thing to do with him again.

In his present wounded state, therefore, Sanjurge was in a sad dilemma, having no nostrums of his own, and being precluded from the assistance of the surgeon. At length he thought of a substitute for his old remedy, and making use of hog's lard, instead of oil, and the shreds of an Indian mantle, instead of wool, he dressed his wound with them, and pronounced his vaunted charm. Faith and a good constitution work miracles in quackery. In the course of four days that the army remained encamped to attend to the sick, Sanjurge had so far recovered as to resume his saddle, galloping up and down in vaunting style among the soldiery, whose faith in his nostrum and his charm became stronger than ever.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, part 2. lib. 5, c. 5.

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

Francisco, the Genoese, with several of his comrades, lie in ambush to entrap some of the natives—the severe skirmish they have with an Indian, and the result.

1542. After leaving the disastrous province of Los Vaqueros, the Spaniards continued for twenty days, by forced marches, through other lands, of which they did not know the name, taking but little pains to gain information, their only object now being to get to the Mississippi.

Although they avoided all pitched battles with the natives, they continued to be harassed by them incessantly. Did a soldier chance to wander a short distance from his comrades, he was instantly shot down. In this manner, no less than forty Spaniards were picked off by lurking foes. By night the Indians would enter the camp on all fours, or drawing themselves along like snakes, without being heard, and thus shoot down horses, and even sentinels who were off their guard.

One day, when the army was about to march,

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Francisco, the Genoese carpenter, obtained permission of the Governor for himself and several troopers, who were in want of servants, to remain behind, and lie in ambush at the place of encampment, for the Indians were accustomed to visit those places as soon as the Spaniards had abandoned them, to pick up any articles they might have left behind.

A dozen horse and twelve foot concealed themselves, accordingly, in a thick clump of trees, one of their companions climbing to the top of the highest to look out and give notice should any Indians approach. In four sallies they captured fourteen of the enemy without any resistance. These they divided among them, two falling to the share of Francisco, the shipwright, as leader of the detachment. The party would then have rejoined the army, but Francisco refused, alleging that he needed another Indian, and that he would not return until he had captured one.

All the efforts of his comrades to shake this foolhardy determination were in vain, each of them offered to give up the Indian that had fallen to his share, but he refused to accept the boon. Yielding, therefore, to his obstinacy, they remained with him in ambush.

In a little while the sentinel in the tree gave

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warning that an Indian was near. One of the horsemen, the same Juan Paez who had recently been wounded in the arm, dashed forth with his wonted impetuosity, and rode full speed at the Indian. The latter, as usual, took refuge under a tree, Paez galloped close by the tree, giving a passing thrust with his lance across the left arm at the Indian. He missed his aim, but his enemy was more successful; for, as the horse passed, he drew his arrow to the head, and buried it just behind the left stirrup leather. The horse plunged several paces forward and fell dead. Francisco de Bolanos, a comrade and townsman of Paez, had followed close behind him; he attacked the Indian in the same way, and failed in his blow likewise, his horse received a similar wound, and went stumbling forward to fall beside his predecessor.

The two dismounted horsemen recovering from their fall, made at the Indian with their lances, while, from the other side, a cavalier, named Juan de Vega, came galloping towards him on horseback. The Indian, thus assailed on both sides, rushed forth from under the tree to encounter the horseman, perceiving, that if he could kill the horse, he could easily escape from his dismounted antagonists by his superior swiftness of foot.

With this intent he sped an arrow at the breast of

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the horse, as he came charging upon him, which would have cleft his heart but for a breast-plate of three folds of tough bull hide with which his rider had provided him. The arrow passed through the breast-plate, and penetrated a hand's breadth in the flesh. The horse continued his career, and Juan de Vega transfixed the savage with his lance.

The Spaniards grieved over the loss of the two horses, more valuable now that their number was so diminished; but their chagrin was doubly heightened when they came to see the enemy who had cost them so dear. Instead of being well made and muscular, like the most of the natives, he was small, lank, and diminutive, giving no promise in his form of the valour of his spirit. Cursing their misfortune, and the wilfulness of Francisco, which had caused it, they set forward with their companions to re-join the army.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, p. 2. lib. 5. c. 5 and 6.

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CHAPTER XXXVII.

They pass through the Province of Chaguete, and Moscoso despatches a party of twelve troopers after Diego de Guzman. Sufferings of the army. Their arrival at the Province of Anilco, and their despondency. Cheered up by news of the fertile country of Aminoya. Añasco despatched to that province, and what he found there.

1542. With similar adventures and disasters did the Spaniards continue their weary journey. Fearful of making too great a bend to the south, and of striking the Mississippi below the province of Guachoya, which was the point where they wished to arrive, they now inclined to the northeast, so as to strike the track they had made on their western course.

This led them back through the province of Naguatex, where they found the villages which they had burnt already rebuilt, and the houses well stocked with maize. In this province, the natives made earthen ware of a very tolerable quality.

In passing through the province of Chaguete, the Governor bethought him of the Spanish cavalier,

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Diego de Guzman, who had taken refuge among the Indians, and sent twelve troopers in search of him; but he had notice of their approach from the Indian spies, and concealed himself. The army, in the mean time, were suffering from scarcity of food, so that the Governor, seeing that Guzman was bent upon remaining among his Indian friends, gave up all further search for him, and proceeded on his march.*

The winter was now set in with great rigour, with heavy rains, violent gales, and extreme cold: yet in their eagerness to arrive at their destined place of repose, they continued to press forward in all weathers, travelling all day, and arriving at nightfall, drenched with rain, and covered with mud, at their place of encampment. They had then to sally out in quest of food, and most of the time were compelled to gain it by force of arms, and sometimes at the expense of many lives.

The rivers became swollen by the rain; even the brooks were no longer fordable, so that almost every day, they were obliged to make rafts to cross them; and at some of the rivers they were detained seven or eight days, by the unceasing opposition of their enemies, and the want of sufficient materials for constructing the rafts. Often, too, at night they

* Portuguese Relation, c. 35.

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had no place whereon to lie, the ground being covered with mud and water. The cavalry passed the night sitting upon their horses, and as to the infantry, with the water up to their knees, their situation may easily be conceived. For clothing, too, they had merely jackets of chamois and other skins, belted round them, serving for shirt, doublet, and coat, and almost always soaking wet; they were in general bare legged, without shoes or sandals.

With these continual sufferings, both men and horses began to sicken and die. Every day two, three, and at one time, seven Spaniards fell victims to the hardships of the journey, and almost all the Indian servants perished. There were no means of carrying the sick and dying, for many of the horses were infirm, and those that were well, were reserved to repel the constant attacks of the enemy. The sick and exhausted, therefore, dragged their steps forward as long as they could, and often died by the way, while the survivers, in their haste to press onward, scarce paused to give them sepulture, leaving them half covered with earth, and sometimes entirely unburied. Yet notwithstanding this sickness and exhaustion, they never failed to post sentinels, and keep up their camp guard at night, to prevent their being surprised and massacred.

At length they arrived at the fertile province of

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Anilco, the Cacique of which had experienced such rough treatment from them, and their savage ally, Guachoya, on their previous visit. They had been, for some time past, cheering themselves during their famished march with the prospect of solacing themselves in this province, which abounded in maize, and of procuring a sufficient supply to sustain them during the time necessary for the construction of their vessels. To their bitter disappointment, however, they found the province of Anilco almost destitute of maize; and had the additional chagrin of knowing that they were the cause of this scarcity. The hostilities they had waged with Anilco, during their residence at Guachoya, had deterred the inhabitants from cultivating their lands; thus seed time passed unimproved, and the year had produced no harvest.

Many of the Spaniards, worn out by past trials, could not stand this new disappointment, but gave way to despair. Without a supply of maize, it would be impossible to subsist through the winter, or to sustain the daily and protracted toils of building the vessels for their departure. Their imaginations magnified the difficulties before them, and painted every thing in dark colours. How were they to build vessels fitted to stand a sea voyage, destitute as they were of pitch and tar, of sails and cordage? How

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were they to navigate without map, or sea chart, or pilot?—how were they to ascertain at what place the great river on which they were to embark, disembogued itself into the ocean? Sorely did they lament their having returned from the Far West, and given up their project of reaching New Spain by land. As to the plan of escaping by sea, nothing, said they, but a miracle would enable them to carry it into effect.

Such were the despondings of many of the Spaniards; and, indeed, a general gloom prevailed through the camp, when they were again encouraged by intelligence derived from some of the Indians of Anilco. They told them that at the distance of two days' journey, on the banks of the Mississippi, there were two towns near to each other, in the country of Aminoya, a region of exuberant fertility; in these they would probably find maize, and other provisions, in abundance.

On receiving this cheering intelligence, the Governor immediately detached Juan de Añasco, with a strong party of horse and foot, to visit these places.* They were accompanied by many of the Indians of Anilco, who were at war with those of Aminoya. After a hard march of two days, they came to the towns, which were situated close together, in an

* Portuguese Relation, c. 35.

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open champaign country, and surrounded by a creek or ditch, filled with water from the Mississippi, so as to form an island.

De Añasco entered the villages without opposition, the inhabitants having fled on their approach. To the great joy of the Spaniards, the houses were abundantly stocked with maize, and other grain; vegetables, nuts, acorns, and dried fruits, such as grapes and plums. In one of the houses they found an old woman, who was too infirm to make her escape. She asked them why they came to that village. They replied, to winter there. The old beldame shook her head, and told them that was no place for winter quarters. Every fourteen years, she said, there was an uncommon rise of the great river, so as to inundate all the surrounding country, and compel the inhabitants to take refuge in the upper part of their houses. This, she added, was the fourteenth year, and an inundation was to be expected. The Spaniards, however, made light of her warning, considering it an old wives' fable, without reflecting that ancient residents of the kind are the chronicles of local fact.

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CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The Spaniards arrive at Aminoya. Commence building brigantines. Quarrel between the Cacique, Guachoya, and the Captain General of Anilco. Singular challenge of the latter.

1542. Having fixed himself in one of the towns, De Añasco sent advices to the Governor of his success, and of the abundance that prevailed around him. Moscoso immediately set off with the residue of the army to join him. Notwithstanding their prospect of speedy repose and good quarters, this was as hard a march as any the troops had experienced. Enfeebled by sickness and famine, they had to traverse several swamps, in a drenching storm of rain, and a bitter north wind.

The hearts of the poor way-worn Spaniards leaped within them when they once more came in sight of the Mississippi, for they regarded it as the highway by which they were to escape out of this land of disaster. They entered the village of Aminoya as a haven of repose, and thanked God

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that they had at length reached a spot where they might rest a while from their wayfaring. Indeed, had they not found, at this juncture, a place of abundance, it is probable most of them would have perished under the rigours and privations of the winter. As it was, many of them but gained this place of rest to die. The excitement of the march had stimulated them beyond their strength; when no longer exertion was necessary, they fell into sickness and lethargy, and in the course of a few days above fifty of them expired.

Among those who had thus survived the toils and perils of the march, to perish in the place of refuge was, Andres de Vasconcellos, a Portuguese cavalier of noble blood, who had distinguished himself on various occasions in the course of this fatal enterprise.

No one, however, was more lamented by the army than the brave and generous Nuño Tobar, a cavalier no less valiant and noble than unfortunate. Having had the ill luck, at the outset of the enterprise, through an error of love, to displease the Governor De Soto, he had never been forgiven, although he had repaired his wrong to the lady by marriage, and atoned to his commander by repeated acts of chivalrous bravery. On the contrary, he had ever been treated by De Soto with a rigour

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and disdain, from which his great merits and services should have shielded him; nor had he been restored to his military rank under that general's successor, Moscoso.

Seeing the favourable situation of the village of Aminoya, and the abundance of the surrounding country, the Governor resolved to establish his winter quarters, and build his brigantines here.* It is true it was about sixteen leagues above the residence of Guachoya, where he had intended to winter, but that was immaterial; the grand object was attained, a secure place on the Mississippi for the construction of his vessels, and his proposed embarcation.

To render his position more comfortable and secure, he destroyed one of the two adjacent villages, and carried all its provisions, wood, and provender to the other. This was surrounded by pallisades, and he set about strengthening its defences, but such was the debilitated state of his men, that it cost him twenty days to accomplish the work. Being now, however, in good quarters, with plenty of food, and suffering no molestation from the natives, they soon began to recover from their

* Mr. McCulloch supposes the village of Aminoya to have been situated in the neighbourhood of the present town of Helena, about thirty miles above the Arkansas.

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fatigues and maladies, and with the renovation of their strength, their spirits likewise revived.

They now set to work to construct seven brigantines, for the embarcation of all their force.—They were built under the superintendence of Francisco, the Genoese, the same who had on various occasions been efficient in constructing bridges, rafts, and boats, being the only person in the army who knew any thing of ship-building. He was assisted by four or five carpenters, of Biscay. Another Genoese and a Catalonian, skilled, as their countrymen usually are, in nautical affairs, engaged to caulk the vessels.

A Portuguese, who had been a slave among the Moors of Fez, had learned the use of the saw, and instructed some of the soldiers in the art. He was to reduce the timber felled in the neighbouring forests into suitable planks: while a cooper, who was almost at death's door, promised, as soon as he was able to work, to make water casks for the vessels.

All the iron work treasured up from former embarcations was now brought forth, and every article of iron that could be spared from other purposes. The chains were knocked off the Indian captives, even the iron stirrups of the troopers were given up, and wooden ones substituted in their place. A

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forge was erected to work up these materials into the necessary forms, and thus the whole undertaking soon began to wear an encouraging aspect.

Assistance was also rendered from other quarters. The old friend and ally of the Spaniards, Guachoya, hearing of their return, came with presents of provisions, and renewed his former intercourse. The Cacique Anilco also, taught by the severe treatment he had brought upon himself by former hostility, now sent his captain general, with a numerous retinue, entreating the friendship of the Governor, and pleading ill health as an excuse for his not coming in person. The captain general was received with great ceremony and respect; he was shrewd and intelligent, and acquitted himself with great address in his intercourse with the Spaniards. He mingled among them familiarly, acquainted himself with their plans and wishes, and transmitted an account of every thing to his Cacique, who immediately contributed every assistance in his power. Every day or two came supplies from Anilco of fish and other provisions, together with various materials for the ships, such as cordage, of various sizes, made of grass and fibrous plants, and mantles made of an herb resembling the mallows, containing a fibre like flax, which the Indians wrought into thread, and dyed with various colours.

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Guachoya emulated Anilco in supplying the various wants of the Spaniards, but fell short of him in constant assiduity. Both Caciques furnished numbers of their subjects to serve in the camp, and to do the rough work about the ships.

To carry on their ship-building without interruption from storms and inundations, the Spaniards erected four large frame buildings. Within these both officers and men toiled without distinction, sawing planks, twisting cordage, making oars, and hammering out iron, and their only pride was shown in striving who should do the most work.

The cordage furnished by Anilco was fabricated into rigging and cables, and when this was not sufficient, the rinds of mulberry trees were substituted. The Indian mantles, when sound and entire, were formed into sails; the old ones were picked into shreds to caulk the vessels. For this latter purpose, also, use was made of an herb resembling hemp, called Enequen; and in place of tar the seams were payed with the rosin and gum of various trees, and with an unctuous kind of earth.

During the whole winter the captain general of Anilco was continually with the Spaniards, officiating as the representative of his Cacique, mingling in all their concerns, administering to their wants, and seemingly taking as much interest in

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their plans as if they had been his own. His important services, and the hearty good will with which they were rendered, made him so popular with both officers and soldiers, that he received, on all occasions, such honours as would have been paid to his Cacique.

All this awakened the jealousy and anger of Guachoya. He had secretly sought to revive the former hostilities between the Spaniards and Anilco, but his intrigues had been in vain. His spleen at length broke forth, in presence of the Governor and his officers, on the occasion of some new honours which they paid to the captain general. He represented the latter as a mere servant and vassal, base in his origin, poor in his circumstances, and remonstrated with the Spaniards for paying more honours to a man of such condition, than to a powerful chieftain.

The general of Anilco listened with a calm, unchanging countenance until he had finished, then, asking permission of the Governor, he replied with generous warmth, showing his honourable descent from the same ancestors as his Cacique, and his high standing as second only to his chieftain and commander of his forces. He reminded Guachoya of victories which he had gained over his father, himself, and his brothers, all of whom he had, at

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different times, had in his power and treated magnanimously; finally, as a mortal trial of prowess, he defied Guachoya to enter alone with him into a canoe, and launch themselves on the Mississippi. The abode of Guachoya lay several leagues down the river, that of the General of Anilco, up the tributary stream which entered into the Mississippi. He who should survive the mortal struggle of the voyage and navigate the canoe to his home, would be an undisputed victor.

The captain general of Anilco concluded his warm and indignant speech, but Guachoya neither accepted the challenge nor answered a word, but remained with confused and downcast countenance. From that time forward the general was held in higher estimation than ever by the cavaliers and the army in general.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, lib. 5, p. 2, c. 10.

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CHAPTER XXXIX.

The league of the Caciques against the Spaniards. Gonzalo Silvestre roughly handles an Indian. How the designs of the hostile Caciques were frustrated.

1543. While the Spaniards were diligently employed building their brigantines, the natives of the surrounding provinces were plotting their destruction. On the opposite side of the Mississippi, a few leagues below Aminoya, extended the vast, fruitful, and populous province of Quigualtanqui; the same province which had been visited by a scouting party, sent by the late Hernando De Soto, during his sojourn at Guachoya; on which occasion, the reader may recollect, taunting messages were sent by the Cacique to the Governor. The Cacique of Quigualtanqui was young and warlike; beloved throughout his extensive dominions, and feared by his neighbours on account of his great power.

Retaining his former enmity to the Spaniards, he learnt with alarm that they were again in his neighbourhood, and building great barks, which might give them command of the river, or enable them to leave the country, and return in greater force to con-

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quer it. He sent envoys, therefore, among the neighbouring Caciques on both sides of the river, and a league was formed to combine their forces at a certain time, for a general assault upon the Spaniards.

The Cacique of Anilco was invited to enter into the league, but he remained true to the Spaniards, and sent the Governor secret intelligence of the conspiracy. Moscoso ordered additional guards to be stationed about the camp, and patrols kept up by night and day, and vigilant watch to be maintained over the places where the arms and munitions of war were deposited. In the mean time, envoys arrived at all hours of the day and night from the Cacique of Quigualtanqui and his allies, bringing messages of friendship, accompanied by presents. The Governor perceived by their roving about the camp, and taking note of every thing, that they were mere spies. He gave peremptory orders, therefore, that no Indian should come by night to the village; but his mandates were disregarded.

One night, Gonzalo Silvestre, with a comrade, was on duty as sentry at one of the gates of the village. He was just recovering from severe illness, and was yet feeble. About the mid-watch, he descried in the clear moonlight two Indians approaching, with bows and arrows in their hands, and lofty plumes on their heads. They advanced

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towards the gate across a fallen tree, which served as a bridge over the fosse. Silvestre, who knew the peremptory orders of the Governor, and the lurking treachery which surrounded them, felt his blood boil at sight of these interlopers. "Here come two Indians," said he to his comrade; "how dare they come at night, in defiance of the prohibition of the Governor. By the mass, the first that enters this gate shall feel the edge of my sword."

His comrade begged him to leave the Indian to him, as he was strong and well, and Silvestre but feeble in health. "By no means," replied the other, "I am strong enough to give these impudent savages a lesson."

The Indian drew nigh, and finding the gate open, entered without hesitation. In an instant, Silvestre gave the foremost a blow in the face with his sword, and felled him to the ground. The savage recovered himself, snatched up his bow and arrows, and plunging into the fosse, swam to the other side. His companion fled across the fallen tree, and leaping into his canoe, made the best of his way across the Mississippi.

At sunrise, four Indian warriors appeared at the camp, complaining in the name of all the neighbouring Caciques of this violation of the peace existing between them, and demanding that as the wounded

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Indian was a warrior of rank, the soldier who struck him should be put to death. Embassies of the kind were repeated at noon, and in the evening, the latter announcing that the warrior had died of his wound.

Luis de Moscoso gave evasive and haughty replies to the ambassadors, which greatly incensed the chieftains of the league. They concealed their rage and hatred, however, consoling themselves with the idea that the day of vengeance was at hand. In the mean time, each Cacique assembled his warriors, and prepared for the signal blow. Their plan was to burst suddenly upon the Spaniards, and massacre every one of them. Should they fail in this, they were to set fire to the hulks of the vessels, and thus prevent their departure. They might then exterminate them by degrees; for they were aware of their diminished numbers, and that but few horses survived—these objects of their chief terror—above all, they knew that the brave Hernando de Soto was no more.

The Spaniards were aware that the momentous day was near at hand: for some of the spies who visited the camp had comforted the Indian captives with assurances of speedy deliverance and revenge; all which the Indian women had revealed to their masters. Added to this, as the nights were still and serene, they would hear the murmuring sound of In-

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dian gatherings on both sides of the river, and could see the camp fires gleaming in different directions.

When this storm of war was about to burst upon the Spaniards, there came on a sudden rising of the river. The prediction of the old Indian woman was verified. Although there had been no fall of rain for a month, yet the Mississippi, in the month of March, swelled above its banks, and inundated the country for several leagues on both sides of the river. The green fields and forests were transformed into a broad sea, with the branches and tops of the trees rising above the surface, and canoes gliding between them in every direction. The town in which the army was quartered was on a rising ground, yet the water rose in the lower parts of the houses, and obliged the troops to take refuge in the garrets, or on sheds erected on strong piles. They had to quarter their horses in the same manner; and for some time it was impossible to go abroad, excepting in canoes, or on horseback, when the water would reach to the stirrups of the trooper. It was in consequence of these inundations, says the Spanish historian, that the Indians built their villages on high hills, or artificial mounds. The houses of the chieftains were often built upon piles, with upper floors, where they might take refuge from the freshets.

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CHAPTER XL.

The Caciques of the League again prepare to attack the Spaniards. An Indian spy. A plot detected.

1543. The swelling of the Mississippi and inundation of the surrounding country, dispersed the hordes of savage warriors, and forced them to take refuge in their villages. The Caciques, however, did not abandon their evil design, but kept up a semblance of friendship, sending repeated messages and presents. Moscoso, ordered a vigilant watch to be kept about the village, and especially about the brigantines, permitting no Indians to come near them in their canoes, through fear of some treacherous design.

The swollen river subsided as slowly as it had risen, and it was two months before it shrunk within its natural channel. As soon as the surface of the country was sufficiently dry, the Caciques again gathered their forces for their premeditated attack.

The General of Anilco gave the Governor warn-

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ing of their movements, and offered to bring a large force of Indians to assist him; but Moscoso declined his offer, lest his services should embroil the generous Anilco with his neighbours, after the departure of the Spaniards.

Anxious to procure particular information of the plans of the conspirators, Moscoso ordered an Indian, who was loitering about the town, and whom he suspected to be a spy, to be put to the rack. This is always a sure mode of forcing out round assertions, whether true or false. The Indian, under torture, declared that twenty Caciques of the neighbourhood were about to attack the camp with a large army: that, to put him off his guard and conceal their treachery, they were to send a present of fish three days before the attack, and another present on the appointed day. That the Indians who brought the fish, combining with those who served in the camp, were to seize upon all lances and other weapons that were at hand, and set fire to the houses. At the sight of the flames, the Caciques, with their troops, were to rush from the places where they lay in ambush, and assail the Spaniards on all sides, in the height of their confusion.

The Governor, having heard the story, ordered the Indian to be kept in chains. On the day he had

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mentioned, thirty Indians came into the town, bearing presents of fish and messages of kindness. The Governor immediately ordered them to be seized, taken aside separately, and examined concerning the conspiracy. They attempted no defence, but made full confession of the plot. Moscoso, with his usual rigour, ordered forthwith that their right hands should be cut off, and that they should be sent thus mutilated, to their homes, to give warning to their Caciques that their treachery was discovered. The stoical savages bore their punishment without flinching; scarce was the hand of one stricken off, when another laid his arm upon the block. Their patience and firmness extorted the pity and admiration even of their enemies.

This sanguinary punishment of their envoys put an end to the league of the Caciques, who gave up their plan of attacking the camp, and returned, each one to his province, but with hearts bent on further hostility.

Guachoya had more than once been suspected by the Spaniards of secret participation in this plot, and had even been charged with it by the Indian spy, when under the torture. There does not appear to have been certain proof; and, indeed, all these stories of plots and conspiracies related by Indians of each other, are to be received with great

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distrust. The Spaniards, doubtless, were often deceived by their allies, who sought through their means, to cripple their rivals and antagonists; and much needless hostility and bloodshed did they bring upon themselves by some harsh measure, either to punish or prevent some imputed treason.

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CHAPTER XLI.

Final preparations of Moscoso and his followers.

1543. Moscoso and his officers, convinced of their perilous situation thus surrounded by open and secret foes, applied themselves assiduously to complete their armament, and provide stores for the voyage. Guachoya, conscious of the late suspicions entertained of him, redoubled his zeal in furnishing maize, fish, and other supplies, and Anilco continued to the last his friendly offices. Throughout all their wanderings the Spaniards had preserved a number of the swine which they had brought with them to stock their intended settlement. These had, in fact, multiplied during the march, and others which had strayed away, or been given to the Indians, had likewise produced their increase. The Spaniards now killed those that remained with them, excepting a dozen and a half which they retained alive, in case they should yet form a settlement near the sea coast, and a few which they made presents to Anilco and Guachoya. The carcasses were then

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cut up and made into bacon for ships' provisions. Of fifty horses that remained, they determined that twenty of the least valuable should be killed and put up for provisions. This was a painful alternative, on account of their long companionship in wayfaring, and the faithful services they had rendered. They were tied to stakes at night, a vein opened, and they were thus left to bleed to death. The flesh was then parboiled and dried in the sun, and laid up among the sea stores. Canoes were linked together, two and two, to convey the others, their fore feet being placed in one canoe and their hind feet in the other, and the canoes were barricaded with boards and hides to ward off the arrows of the Indians.

When the brigantines were ready for service, there was an unusual swelling of the river, so that the water reached the place where they were on the stocks, and they were launched with great ease. This was a fortunate circumstance, for they were built of such thin planks, and fastened with such short nails, that they might have bulged in being transported over land. They were merely large barks, open except at the bow and stern, where they had coverts to protect the sea stores. Along the gunwales were bulwarks of boards and hides,

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and boards were laid athwart them to serve as decks. They had seven oars on each side, at which all were to take their turns indiscriminately, excepting the captains. Each brigantine had two commanders, so that in emergencies, one might act on shore, while the other remained to govern on board.

The little squadron being now afloat and all ready for embarcation, the Governor made his final arrangements on shore. Two days before his departure he took a kind farewell of Guachoya, and the captain general of Anilco, sending them both back to their homes, first making them promise to live in friendship with each other after he was gone. The next day he dismissed the greater part of the Indians, male and female, who had been in the service of the camp, retaining those only, of both sexes, who were of distant tribes and had followed the army in its wanderings. But a remnant survived, not above thirty, out of a multitude that had from time to time been captured and reduced to servitude, in the course of their extensive marchings. The rest had perished by degrees, in the various hardships to which they had been exposed. These survivers had, for the most part, become attached to the Spaniards, and moreover, dreaded to be left

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among the strange tribes, who might enslave and maltreat them.*

* The Portuguese Relation makes the number of Indians thus embarked, amount to one hundred. The number given by the Inca is most probable, both narratives having previously stated that most of the Indians who had followed the army in its last march perished before arriving at Aminoya.

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CHAPTER XLII.

Embarcation of the Spaniards upon the Mississippi. A grand and concerted attack by a large fleet of canoes, and how the Spaniards fared. Gonzalo Silvestre sent on shore with a detachment of men for provisions. Loss of their horses.

1543. On the second day of July, the Spaniards embarked on board their seven brigantines. The largest one, named the Capitana, was commanded by Luis de Moscoso, as admiral of this little fleet. Of the numerous and brilliant host that had entered on this heroic but disastrous enterprise, not quite three hundred and fifty survived; and these in forlorn and wretched plight; their once brilliant armour battered, broken, and rusted; their rich and silken raiment reduced to rags, or replaced by the skins of wild beasts.

The sun was setting as they got under way, and the gloom of evening seemed an emblem of their darkening fortunes. They were abandoning the fruit of all their labour and hardships, the expected

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reward of their daring exploits, the land of their golden dreams. They were launching forth on a vast and unknown river, leading they knew not whither, and were to traverse, in frail and rudely constructed barks, without chart or compass, great wastes of ocean, to which they were strangers, bordered by savage coasts, in the vague hope of reaching some Christian shore, on which they would land beggars!

With sail and oar they pursued their course all night, and on the following morning passed by the residence of Guachoya. Here they found many of the inhabitants waiting in their canoes to receive them, and beheld a rustic bower of branches of trees prepared for their reception. The Governor, however, excused himself from landing, whereupon the Indians accompanied him in their canoes to where the river forked into two branches. They warned him that he was near the residence of Quigualtanqui, and offered to accompany him, and make war upon that Cacique; but the Governor, who desired nothing less than any hostile encounter with the natives, declined their offer, and dismissed them.

The little fleet continued its course by the main branch of the river, where there was a rapid current; and in the afternoon hauled to shore on the

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left bank, where the Spaniards passed the rest of the day in a spacious wood. At night they re-embarked, and continued their course. On the following day, they landed near a village which the Indians had abandoned, and took a woman prisoner, who informed them that the Cacique of Quigualtanqui had assembled all his forces further down the river, and was waiting to attack them.

This intelligence put them on their guard, but made them ready to suspect hostilities, where perhaps they were not intended. They had not proceeded much farther down the river, when, as they were foraging on shore, and carrying off provisions wherever they found them, they perceived a number of canoes hovering on the opposite side of the river, and, as they thought, menacing hostilities. The cross-bow men immediately leaped in the canoes that were astern of the brigantines, pushed across the river, and readily dispersed the savages. No sooner had the cross-bow men returned to the brigantines, and the latter got under weigh, than the light barks of the savages were again in sight; keeping ahead of the squadron, and drawing up near a village that stood on a high bank, they seemed disposed to make battle. The canoes were again manned, the Indians were once more dispersed, and the Spaniards landing, set fire to the village;

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after which, they encamped for the night in an open plain.

Whatever may have been the previous disposition and intentions of the Indians, they had now fair grounds for hostility; nor did they fail to wage it to the utmost. On the following morning, a powerful fleet of canoes was in sight, apparently the combined force of the hostile Caciques. Some of them were of great size, with from fourteen to twenty-five paddles on a side, and carried from thirty to seventy warriors. They darted across the water with the speed of race horses.

The canoes of the Caciques, and some of the principal warriors, were brilliantly painted, both within and without; the paddles, the rowers, and even the warriors themselves, from the feet to the scalping tuft, were painted of one colour. Some were blue, others yellow or white, red, green, violet or black, according to the device or taste of the chieftain.

For that day, and part of the next, they followed the Spaniards without attacking them, keeping time in rowing by chanting wild songs of different cadences, short or long, slow or fast, according to the speed with which they desired to move, and closing each chant with a terrific and deafening yell, shouting the name of Quigualtanqui. The burthen of these wild war songs, was the chivalrous exploits of their

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ancestors, and the daring deeds of their chieftain, by recalling the memory of which, they roused themselves to battle. They proudly vaunted their own fearlessness and valour, while they taunted the Spaniards with cowardice in flying from their arms, and threatened to overthrow them, and make them food for fishes.

About noon of the second day, there was a movement among the fleet of canoes. They separated into three different divisions, forming a van, centre, and rear, and approached the right bank of the river. The canoes in the van then darted forward, glided along to the right of the brigantines, and crossing the river obliquely, discharged a shower of arrows, which wounded many Spaniards, in spite of their shields and bulwarks. They then wheeled round, and recrossing the river in front of the brigantines, stationed themselves on the right bank. The second squadron, composing the centre of the fleet, performed the same manœuvre, and having discharged their arrows, recrossed the river, and stationed themselves in front of the van. The rear did likewise, and then took up their position in front of all.

As the caravels advanced, the Indians repeated their attack after the same manner, always returning to the right bank of the river. In this manner the savages battled with the Spaniards all the day

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long, never giving them a moment's rest, and breaking their repose during the night by incessant alarms.

When the Spaniards were first attacked, they manned the canoes in which the horses were, for the purpose of protecting them, as they expected to combat hand to hand with the savages. Perceiving, however, the intention of the enemy to fight at a distance, and gall them with their arrows, and finding themselves exposed to their fire, they returned to the brigantines, leaving the horses with no other defence save the skins of animals thrown over them.

In these contests, the Spaniards had to return the enemy's fire from their cross-bows, for their arquebusses had never been of use since the destruction of their gunpowder, at the conflagration of Mauvila, and they had been wrought up with other articles into iron work for the brigantines. They sought not, however, to make offensive war, but merely to keep the enemy at bay, while the rowers plied their oars; and they sheltered themselves as well as they were able, with buffalo skins, and shields made of double mats, through which an arrow could not penetrate.

This harassing warfare continued for several days and nights, until most of the Spaniards were wounded, and all were worn out with fatigue and

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watching, and with the weight of their armour. Of the horses, also, only eight remained alive. The Indians, at length, desisted from their attacks, and hovered at the distance of half a league.

The Governor, imagining they had given over all further hostilities, and supposing that the sea could be at no great distance ahead, was desirous of procuring a fresh supply of provisions. Observing a small village on the banks of the river, he sent Gonzalo Silvestre on shore with a hundred men and the eight horses, to seek supplies. The inhabitants of the village fled with loud yells at the approach of such strange people, and strange animals. Silvestre found abundance of maize and dried fruits, with skins of different animals, and among the rest, a martin skin, decorated with strings of pearl, which appeared to have been used as a banner. While he and his party were making plunder of every thing in their way, they heard the trumpet clamorously sounding their recall. Hurrying to the river bank, they beheld a fleet of canoes pulling towards them with all speed, while a band of Indians were running to cut them off by land. Springing into their canoes they pulled with desperate exertions to the brigantines, abandoning the horses to their fate. The Indians turned to vent their fury upon the latter. The gallant animals defended themselves by kicking and

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plunging; some of the savages were so frightened at what they took for ferocious beasts, that they leaped into the water; the rest, however, hunted the poor horses like so many deer, transfixed them with their arrows, and made an end of them.

Thus miserably perished the remnant of the three hundred and fifty noble steeds, that had entered Florida in such gorgeous array. As the Spaniards beheld these generous and faithful animals slaughtered before their eyes, without being able to aid them, they sorrowed deeply, and shed tears for them as though they had been their own children.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega. L. 6. c. 5. Portuguese Relation, c. 38.

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CHAPTER XLIII.

Continuation of the voyage down the Mississippi. The fool-hardy exploit of Estevan Añez. The feat of Pedro Moron, the half-breed. Uncertain fate of De Guzman.

1543. The Indians continued to follow at some distance in the rear of the Spaniards, attacking any of their vessels that lagged behind, until the sixteenth day of this harassing voyage.

On board of one of the brigantines was a soldier named Estevan Añez. He was of low birth, but had joined the expedition as a trooper. His steed, though of sorry appearance, had proved tough and strong, and was among the last that perished. Owing to his being mounted, Añez had been engaged in some of the most perilous service of the expedition, and though he had never performed any thing of note, had gained the reputation of a gallant man. This, added to his natural rusticity and narrow spirit, had rendered him weak and vainglorious.

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This day he got into the canoe, attached to the stern of the brigantine, under pretence of going to speak with the Governor, but in reality on a hare-brained project. He enticed with him five young cavaliers of buoyant spirits and daring valour, promising them some brilliant exploit. One of them, Carlos Enriquez, scarce twenty years of age, graceful in form, and with a countenance of surpassing beauty, was the natural son of Don Carlos Enriquez, who fell bravely fighting in the battle of Mauvila.

Estevan Añez, with these five gallant young cavaliers, pulled directly for the Indian fleet that stretched across the river in the rear. The Governor witnessing this mad freak, ordered the trumpets to sound a recall. The captains of the brigantines likewise shouted and made signs to them to return. The louder they shouted the more obstinate and vainglorious grew Estevan Añez, and instead of returning he made signs for the brigantines to follow him. When Luis de Moscoso beheld the stubbornness of this madman, he despatched forty-six Spaniards in three canoes after him, vowing to hang him the moment he should be brought back. Juan de Guzman, the commander of one of the brigantines, was the first to leap into a canoe, followed by his friend Juan de Vargas. Guzman prided himself upon his skill in managing a canoe, and resisted the

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entreaties of his friends that he would remain in the brigantine.

The savages perceiving their approach, made a retrograde movement, for the purpose of leading them away from the brigantines, which, having furled their sails, were pulling slowly against the current to reinforce their comrades. Estevan Añez, however, being blinded by his sottish vanity, instead of mistrusting their designs, was deceived by this stratagem, and pulled with redoubled might towards them, crying, "they fly! they fly! at them! at them!" The other three canoes increased their efforts likewise, hoping either to detain him or lend him succour.

The Indians allowed their foes to draw nigh, then altered the disposition of their forces, the centre retreating, so as to form a half moon, and thus luring the Christians into the midst of them. They then assailed them furiously in front and flank. Some leaped into the water and overturned the canoes of the Spaniards, many of whom were carried down by the weight of their armour and drowned. Some who kept themselves up by swimming were shot with arrows, or struck over the head with paddles, and others who clung to the overturned canoes were beaten off. In this manner, without being able to make the least defence, forty-

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eight Spaniards miserably perished. Four alone escaped. One was Pedro Moron, the half-breed, who was an expert swimmer, and exceedingly skilful in the management of a canoe; he had fallen in the river, but, with great dexterity and strength, recovered his bark and made his escape, bearing off with him three other soldiers. One of them, named Alvaro Nieto, battled alone and kept the savages at bay, whilst Pedro Moron guided the canoe; but neither the prowess and valour of the one, nor the dexterity and skill of the other would have availed them aught, had not the brigantine of Juan de Guzman fortunately been near. This bark was in advance of the rest, the crew having made greater exertion, aware that their much loved leader was in the midst of the affray; thus they rescued four of their comrades. Another Spaniard, Juan Terron, reached the brigantine, but as his companions were raising him out of the water, he breathed his last in their arms, being pierced with more than fifty wounds. The survivers asserted that they had seen the gallant De Guzman borne off by the Indians in one of their canoes, but whether dead or alive they could not tell.

Luis de Moscoso once again arranged his fleet in order, and resumed his eventful voyage, deeply

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lamenting the loss of these generous and valiant cavaliers.

This was the last assault of the savages, for they seemed satisfied with this signal blow. All the rest of the day, and during the doleful night that succeeded, they kept up continual shouts and yells of triumph. When the sun rose on the following day they appeared to worship him and to return thanks for their victory, then raising a deafening din of voices, mingled with the sound of trumpets, shells, and drums, they turned their prows up the river and departed for their homes.

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CHAPTER XLIV.

The Spaniards reach the Ocean—disembark on an island of drift-wood. Fierce encounter with the natives of the Coast. They anchor off an uninhabited island.

1543. The poor harassed Spaniards once more began to breathe, when they saw their cruel enemies depart. They now cast about their thoughts as to their position. The river had expanded until it was several leagues in breadth, so that, when in the midst, they could not descry firm land on either side; nothing was to be seen but a border of swamp or marsh, with tall reeds, that looked like forests at a distance. The departure of the Indians led them to conjecture that the sea was near at hand. Keeping the centre of the current, therefore, lest they should wander into some deep bay, they continued onward, with sail and oar and favouring breeze, until on the twentieth day, a broad expanse of water opened before them. On their left lay a large island, formed by vast quantities of drift-wood,

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swept down the river and piled up by the waves. About a league further was an uninhabited island, such as is often found at the mouths of great rivers, formed by alluvial deposits. The Spaniards were convinced by these signs, that they had reached the mouth of the river, and that the boundless ocean lay before them.

They now steered for the island of drift-wood, and found a secure harbour for their brigantines; for they could lay them along side of the floating masses of timber, which rose and fell with the tide, and, fastening them to trunks of huge trees which lay imbedded there, leave them as secure as if at a pier head. Here, then, they landed, and overhauled their vessels, to repair any damage that they might have sustained, and to fit them for the buffetings of the ocean. Others killed the few hogs that yet remained alive, and made them into bacon. These labours, however, required but little time; the great object in landing on the island was repose; and so exhausted were they from the constant watchfulness they had been obliged to sustain for three weeks past, that during three days they did little else than sleep; and that so profoundly, that they lay about like so many dead bodies.

About noon on the third day, they were roused from their repose by the appearance of enemies.

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Seven canoes issued from among reeds and rushes, and approaching within hail, a gigantic Indian, black as an Ethiopian, either from paint or natural complexion, stood up in the prow of the foremost, and addressed them in a thundering voice. After a brief harangue, accompanied by menacing looks and gestures, he turned his prow, and followed by his companions, shot back again among the rushes; where, from time to time, other canoes were perceived gliding about as if in ambush.

On the words of this black warrior being explained, as they were partially understood by the Indian domestics, they proved to be insulting epithets, and threats of hostility. The Governor feared they might put their threats in execution, and attempt to surprise him in the night, and burn his vessels; he determined, therefore, to be beforehand with them, and strike the first blow. He accordingly detached a party of picked men, in five canoes, to beat up the cane-brake. Among them were twenty-two cross-bow men and three archers. One of these archers was an Englishman by birth; another had lived in England from his boyhood until his twenty-eighth year, and had acquired there his skill with the long bow and the cloth-yard arrow, for which the English were renowned. Through-

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out the expedition these two archers had used no other weapon, and had been noted for their deadly aim. The third archer was an Indian, servant of the gallant Juan de Guzman, who had fallen in the late battle, whom he had served faithfully on all occasions, with bow and arrow, since his first landing in Florida.

The detachment was commanded by Gonzalo Silvestre and Alvaro Nieto. They discovered the canoes of the enemy drawn up in battle array among the rushes, in formidable numbers. The savages waited until they were within bow shot, when, having let fly a cloud of arrows that wounded several soldiers, they swept in among the rushes, and came to a second stand. In this way, they fired and wheeled about, and came again to the charge like so many horsemen. The cross-bow men and the three archers kept up a well directed fire, and galled the Indians excessively; at length the Spaniards were able to come to close quarters, overturned three of the canoes of the enemy, killed several of the crew, and put the whole armament to flight. They however came out of this affray very roughly handled; most of them were wounded, and among the number, the two commanders.

Fearing an attack in the night, and that fire might

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be set to the vessels, the Governor embarked all the forces and made sail for the uninhabited island, under the lea of which he anchored, in forty fathoms water. All that night the Spaniards slept on their arms, on board of their vessels, ready for action: the enemy, however, offered no further molestation.

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CHAPTER XLV.

A council of officers called to determine upon their future course. They set sail. Añasco prevails upon them to follow his advice.

1543. When the day dawned, the Governor called a council of his officers to determine what course to steer. To attempt to cross to Cuba or Hispaniola was considered entirely out of the question: as they knew not in what quarter to seek them, nor were they provided with nautical instruments necessary for such a voyage: it was determined, therefore, to make for the coast of Mexico, or New Spain: in seeking which, they would have the land always on their right, to resort to as occasion required.

Juan de Añasco now stood forth with his usual bustling zeal, whenever any important measure was to be adopted. He piqued himself much upon a knowledge of maritime affairs, as he did upon various other kinds of knowledge, and declared that, according to maps which he had seen, the coast from the place where he supposed them to be, bore east and west to the river of Palms, and from that river

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to New Spain it ran north and south, making a complete bend or gulf. He advised, therefore, that they should put out to sea in a south-west direction, so as to steer across the gulf; by this route they might reach the Mexican shores in ten or twelve days, whereas, if they kept near the land, and followed the windings of the coast, the voyage would necessarily be prolonged, and they might be overtaken by winter before they could reach a Christian country. To illustrate his ideas, he drew a rough sea chart, according to his notions of the coast, upon a piece of parchment, made from a deer's skin; he also produced an old astrolabe, which, being of metal, had escaped the conflagration at Mauvila, and which he had preserved with curious care; and a fore-staff, which he had made from a carpenter's rule; with these to take observations and to steer by, he offered to pilot the squadron across the gulf, to the shores of New Spain.

The Governor was at first inclined to adopt this council, especially as it was concurred in by some of the officers. The majority, however, opposed it; partly through doubts of the nautical knowledge of Juan de Añasco, who they knew had but little practical experience; partly, perhaps, from jealousy of the lead so often given to him in services of moment, but chiefly because of the real dangers of his propo-

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sition. They argued, that the brigantines, being so slightly built, and without decks, would be in danger of foundering in the least storm. That their peril would be almost equally great on the high sea, in calms or head winds, from the want of fresh water, having so few casks to put it in. And that it would be the height of rashness to attempt to cross a vast and unknown gulf without a compass to steer by, and an experienced pilot to direct them. They concluded, therefore, that, though it might be the slower, it would be the far surer course to keep along the coast, where they could land occasionally for supplies, and take refuge in creeks, and bays, and river mouths, in case of tempestuous weather. This council finally prevailed, much to the chagrin of Juan de Añasco.

Orders were now given to make sail, when, as they were weighing anchor, the cable of the Governor's brigantine parted. Unfortunately, there was no buoy to mark the place, and the water was extremely deep. For six hours the most expert divers were employed in search of it, but in vain: so they had to supply its place with a heavy stone, and the bits from the troopers' bridles, to increase the weight.

It was not until three o'clock in the afternoon that they made sail. The Governor took the lead, and close to his brigantine was that commanded by De

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Añasco. They kept on for two or three leagues into the broad sea, when the captains of the other vessels bore up, and, hailing the Governor, demanded whether he intended to quit the shore, contrary to the resolution of the council; declaring that if he did so, they would abandon him, and take each one his own course.

Moscoso replied, that he did but stand to sea to sail with more security during the night, but that he would return to the coast in the day time. All that night, and the next day, they kept on with a fair wind, and, to their surprise, in fresh water, owing to the immense quantity disembogued by the Mississippi. About nightfall, they anchored at a small rocky island, that they might take a little repose.

Here the zealous Juan de Añasco again produced his deer skin chart, and inveighed against the loss of time and labour in thus creeping pusillanimously along the shore, instead of standing boldly across the gulf. His arguments at length prevailed, and, on the following morning, with one consent, they all stood out to sea. For two days the stout Juan de Añasco piloted them triumphantly with the aid of his astrolabe and forestaff, and frequent consultations of the deer skin chart; at length the water growing scanty, they felt inclined to stand toward the shore, but were met in the teeth by a contrary wind.

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Two days did this wind continue, and kept them beating about in the high seas until their water was nearly expended. Bitterly now did they curse Juan de Añasco for giving his advice, and the Governor for following it, and swore that if they once more got in with the land, they would keep along it, let Moscoso and his nautical counsellor take what course they pleased. On the fourth day, when they were at their last drop of water, the wind veered a little, and, plying every oar, they made for land. Those on board of the vessels, who knew any thing of nautical matters, now vented their spleen upon Juan de Añasco as a meddling pretender, who had never been at sea before this expedition, and knew nothing of maritime affairs; and the common soldiers made merry at the expense of his astrolabe and deer skin chart. This coming to the ears of the irritable Añasco, he flung his forestaff into the sea, with the chart which was tied to it, and would have sent the astrolabe after them, but that prudence tempered his wrath. Fortunately, the forestaff and chart floated, and were picked up by the brigantines which followed, and Juan de Añasco was gradually pacified. He seems, in fact, to have been the person in the squadron who had the best notion of their situation and true course, and his idea of the run of the coast was in the main correct.

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CHAPTER XLVI.

Vessels in danger of stranding. Come to some small Islands, where they repair the brigantines —overtaken by a violent gale, and two caravels driven to sea. Mutiny of Juan Gaytan's crew.

1543. It was with much toil and difficulty that the Spaniards rowed to shore, where they landed on a sand beach without shelter. In the evening the wind freshened up directly from the south, and drove the vessels from their weak anchors, so that they were in danger of stranding. The crews were obliged to leap in the water, and bear up against them to keep them from bilging. When the wind had subsided they dug pits in the sand, from which they procured fresh water enough to fill their casks. In this way they supplied themselves with water throughout the voyage, whenever there were no springs or streams at hand. After sailing about fifteen days, they came to four or five small islands, not far from the main land. Here they found innumerable quantities of sea birds, that built their

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nests upon the sand, and so close together, that it was almost impossible to walk without treading upon them. The men landed and returned to the vessels, laden with eggs and young birds, which were almost too fat to eat. Threading these islands, they coasted along until they came to a beautiful beach, free from rushes, skirted by a grove of large trees, clear of bush, brake, or underwood. Here they found great quantities of that scum of the sea called copeck, resembling pitch. They, therefore, remained here several days careening their brigantines on the beach, caulking their seams, and paying them with this copeck, mixed with hog's-lard. While thus employed they were visited several times by a few of the natives, armed with bows and arrows, but pacific in their conduct, who brought maize to give in exchange for skins. Continuing their voyage, the Spaniards were exceedingly molested in some parts of the coast by clouds of mosquitoes, so virulent in their sting, that the faces of the men were swollen out of all shape, and it was necessary to stand by the rowers and drive off these pestilent insects from their heads as they laboured at the oar.

When the weather was pleasant the men fished, while others went on shore and gathered shell-fish, for they were on short allowance, their pork being

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expended, and but little maize remaining. Some of the fish taken were of a very large size, one of which jerked with such violence as to pull the unwary fisherman into the water.

For fifty-three days did the Spaniards keep on along the coast, steering to the westward. A grea part of the time, however, was expended in occasionally repairing the vessels, in fishing, and in sheltering themselves from rough weather. Juan de Añasco insisted that, from the distance they had come, they could not be far from the river of Palms, from which, as he had before represented, according to his recollections of the map he had seen, the coast bore from north to south. The fleet stood a little out to sea, and the next morning early they perceived palm trees rising above the surface of the water at a distance, and observed that the coast actually lay north and south. In the afternoon high mountains began to loom up afar off, the first they had seen on any part of the sea coast since their first landing at Espiritu Santo. The opinions of Juan de Añasco now rose in estimation, and it was concluded that they had passed the river of Palms in the night time. If so, they could not be above sixty leagues from the river of Panuco, in the neighbourhood of Spanish settlements.

They had not proceeded far, however, when a

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violent gale rose from the north. Five of the brigantines, among them that of the Governor, made for the land, the other two caravels, one under the command of the treasurer, Juan Gaytan, who, since the untimely death of De Guzman, had remained sole captain, and the other, commanded by Juan de Alvorado, and Christoval Mosquera, not taking timely warning of the coming gale, stood off too far from the coast, and were consequently exposed all the night long to the fury of the tempest. The caravel of Juan Gaytan was at one time in imminent peril. A sudden flaw of wind struck her and wrenched the mast out of the beam in which it rested, and it was with the utmost difficulty they could again right it. When morning dawned, the gale, instead of lulling, as the mariners had predicted, raged with renewed violence. They observed the other five brigantines enter some river or creek, and anchor in safety: this stimulated them to redouble their efforts to reach their companions. It was all in vain, however, for the wind was exactly ahead, and by their fruitless struggles, they were several times in danger of foundering. Still, they persisted until the afternoon, when, convinced that they were toiling to no purpose, they bore off, and ran along the coast with the wind on the quarter, the billows all the while breaking over them, so that they were in the utmost danger of being swamped.

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For six and twenty hours did this gale continue with unabated fury, during which time the Spaniards were struggling with the winds and waves, without a moment's repose, and scarcely tasting food. Just as the sun was going down, there was a cry of "land ahead!" A boy named Francisco, who was in the brigantine under the command of Juan de Alvorado, and Francisco Mosquera, said to these captains, "Señores, I know this coast ahead, as I have visited it twice before, as cabin boy of a ship; the dark land stretching along to the left is a rough and rock-bound coast, extending to the harbour of Vera Cruz. In all that distance there is neither port nor shelter, but it is studded with sharp pointed rocks, which, if we strike, all will be lost. The light coloured land turning off to the right is a soft sand beach, which we can attain ere nightfall; should the wind drive us upon those dark and gloomy shores, we have little chance of our lives!"

So soon as the vessels drew nigh to each other, the two captains warned Juan Gaytan and his crew of their danger. They immediately determined to shape their course for the white shore. But Juan Gaytan, who was a better treasurer than captain, opposed this measure, saying it was not well thus to lose a valuable bark. This exasperated the crew, who began to mutiny and murmur, "Is this

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vessel of more worth than our lives?" said they. "You presume upon your rank of royal treasurer; Did you cut wood, or make charcoal for the forges, or beat out the iron for the nails, or caulk the vessel, or do any thing else? No! you excused yourself as an officer of the Emperor; pray then, what do you lose if the brigantine is wrecked?"

Upon this the principal soldiers set to work trimming the sails, and a Portuguese, named Domingos de Acosta, seized the helm, and turned the prow of the bark towards the desired shore. After making several tacks, they struck upon the sand beach, before the sun had set, and succeeded in unlading and hauling the vessel on dry land. The other brigantine effected a landing in a similar manner, and with like success.

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CHAPTER XLVII.

Expedition of Gonzalo Silvestre to obtain information about the country. What happened to Moscoso and the rest of the fleet. How the Spaniards were received by the inhabitants of Panuco.

1543. The crews of the two barks now assembled together to decide what was to be done. It was unanimously resolved to send messengers to seek the Governor, and bear him tidings of their situation. But who would undertake this perilous journey? They would have to travel thirteen or fourteen leagues through an unknown land, ford rivers, and peradventure encounter enemies.

Gonzalo Quadrado Xaramillo and Francisco Muñzo undertook the task. Taking a small supply of provisions, and buckling on their shields and swords, they set forth at midnight on their hazardous errand.

Their comrades then returned to their brigantines, posted sentries, and slept until the following

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morning. No sooner was it light, than they chose three captains to set out, each with twenty men, to obtain information respecting the country. One party followed the coast to the north, another to the south, and the third, under Gonzalo Silvestre, struck in a westwardly direction to penetrate into the interior.

The two first named parties returned in a short time, one bringing a half dish of white porcelain, of Spanish manufacture, the other a broken porringer of painted earthenware. The rapture of their comrades is easier to be conceived than described at beholding these signs of the neighbourhood of some Spanish settlement.

Gonzalo Silvestre and his band penetrated a little more than a quarter of a league, when, from a hillock, they beheld a beautiful lake of fresh water spread out before them, a half league in extent. Upon its waters were several canoes, with Indians fishing. Fearing that these might see them, and spread the alarm, they struck into a wood that bordered the lake, and keeping silently on for a quarter of a league, they espied two Indians beneath a huge guava tree, gathering the fruit. Dragging themselves along on the ground among the herbage until near at hand, they rose at the same time, and rushed to seize them. One of the Indians plunged into the

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lake, and escaped by swimming; the other they took prisoner. They made prize of two baskets of guavas, a Mexican turkey, two Spanish fowls, and some maize, and then pushed for the vessels.

On arriving at the sea shore, they found their comrades joyfully examining the tokens of civilization found by the two Captains. When, however, they beheld the articles brought by Silvestre and his party, they leaped and danced about like mad. At length a surgeon, who had formerly been in Mexico, asked the Indian the name of a pair of scissors he held in his hand. He immediately called it by its Spanish name. This convinced them that they were in the territory of Mexico, and so overjoyed were they that they embraced Silvestre and his men, and hoisting that Captain upon their shoulders, bore him about the shore in triumph.

When this wild ebullition of joy was over, they inquired more particularly concerning the country. They learnt that the river into which Luis de Moscoso, with the five brigantines, had taken refuge, was the Panuco; and that on its banks, twelve leagues above, stood a city of the same name. The Indian told them, moreover, that about a league off, lived a Cacique, who could read and write, and had been educated by the priests.

These joyful tidings gladdened their hearts, and

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having feasted the Indian, and given him presents, they despatched him to the Christian Cacique, with a request that he would either bring or send a supply of ink and paper. He soon returned, and with him the Cacique, followed by a train of eight Indians, laden with fowls, bread of maize, and various fruits and fish, together with paper and ink. The Spaniards immediately sent off an Indian with a letter to Moscoso, giving him an account of all that had happened, and requesting directions as to their future movements.

In the mean time, the Governor, Moscoso, when with his five brigantines he took refuge in the river from the gale, beheld, to his great joy, several Indians on shore clothed in the Spanish fashion. Calling out to them in Spanish, he demanded in what country they were. The Indians answered in the same language, that they were on the river of Panuco, and that the town was not fifteen leagues distant. Upon this the Spaniards leaped on shore, kissed the ground repeatedly, and throwing themselves on their knees, poured out their thanks to God.

They now made the best of their way to the town of Panuco, where, in a few days, they were rejoined by their shipwrecked comrades. Their first act on entering the town was to repair to the church, and offer up thanks to God for having preserved them

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through so many perils and hardships. The burghers of the town crowded to the church to offer them assistance. The Corregidor took Moscoso into his house as his guest; the others were quartered among the inhabitants.

The town was for the most part built of stone, and contained about seventy families, who lived simply but abundantly, the wealthiest not having above five hundred crowns of income. Many of the inhabitants, however, were courteous cavaliers, and all were touched with pity at beholding this forlorn remnant of the gallant armament, that had created such a noise on its outset from Cuba.

The survivers in fact, were blackened, haggard, shrivelled, and half naked, being clad only with the skins of deer, buffaloes, bears, and other animals, so that, says the Spanish narrator, they looked more like wild beasts than human beings.

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CHAPTER XLVIII.

Discontents and broils among the soldiery. Their subsequent fortunes.

1543. The Chief Magistrate of Panuco despatched a messenger forthwith, to Don Antonio de Mendoza, the Viceroy of Mexico, which city lay some seventy leagues distant, to apprise him that a small remnant of Hernando de Soto's army had returned from Florida. The Viceroy sent word, without delay, that they should be shown every kindness and honour, and furnished with whatever was necessary for their journey, when sufficiently recovered from their fatigues. He accompanied his message with a supply of shirts and sandals, and also four mules laden with delicacies and medicines for the sick.

Luis de Moscoso and his men, while sojourning in this city, had time to reflect upon the beautiful country they had abandoned, and they began to draw comparisons between it and Panuco. They found that here the people were but indifferently circumstanced, having neither mines of gold nor

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silver, nor any other treasure. Their dress was mere garments of cotton; their only source of wealth the breeding of horses, and planting mulberry trees. They now began to retrace in memory the beautiful provinces they had discovered; their wild fertility and prodigal abundance; their capabilities for raising maize and grain and vegetables; their verdant meadows and rich pasturages; their vast tracts of woodland, watered by running streams, so well adapted to the raising of herds and flocks. But above all, they called to mind the treasures of pearls, which they had not appreciated, as each one had fancied himself lord of boundless domains.

Turning these things over in their minds, they began to murmur among themselves. "Could we not," said they, "have dwelt in Florida as these Spaniards live in Panuco? and had we remained and settled there, would we not have been more opulent than these our hosts? Is it well, that we should come and receive alms and hospitality from others poorer than ourselves, when we might have entertained all Spain? Is it just or creditable to our honour, that we, who might have been chieftains, have come to beg? Better far would it have been to have bravely perished there, than to live here in poverty!"

These murmurings and repinings produced vio-

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lent discord among them. Their greatest rage, however, was against the officers of the royal revenue, and the captains and cavaliers, who, after the death of the Governor, Hernando de Soto, had insisted upon leaving Florida, and had obstinately forced Luis de Moscoso to undertake that long and disastrous journey to the province of Los Vaqueros, instead of sending two brigantines for reinforcements, as had been intended. Several affrays took place, in which blood was shed and some lives lost. The officers and cavaliers were fain to keep within doors, and the town was continually distracted by the broils between the soldiery.

The corregidor of Panuco, finding that this discord increased from day to day, sent word to the Viceroy, Don Antonio de Mendoza, who ordered them to be sent immediately to Mexico, in bands of ten and twenty, and that care should be taken to separate those who were at variance, lest they should fight by the road.

In pursuance of this order, they left Panuco twenty-five days after their arrival there. The inhabitants along the road thronged to see them; eager to behold men who had survived such toils and endured such hardships. The fame of their great sufferings and daring exploits had spread throughout the land, and both Indians and Spaniards en-

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tertained them with great kindness and hospitality throughout their journey. When they arrived at the renowned city of Mexico, throngs of the citizens flocked out to receive them, and conducted them to their homes, where they feasted them and clothed them in sumptuous apparel. The Viceroy treated the Governor and his officers with distinguished attention, and extended his kindness to the humblest of their followers.

Some of the skins and furs which the army had brought with them were highly prized in Mexico. A few strings of pearls, also, which remained among them, proved to be of immense value. The beautiful martin skins, however, were valued above all. Finding that men of wealth prized so highly what they had despised, their despondency increased; they brooded bitterly over their folly in abandoning a country which had cost them so dearly to discover, and where these valuable articles abounded. Discontented with themselves, they forgot their former companionship and brotherhood in arms, and again broke out into fierce and sanguinary brawls.

The Viceroy, to console them, promised that, if they desired to return to Florida, he would himself undertake the conquest of the country; in fact, he had an inclination for the enterprise, and offered employment and salaries to many of the officers

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and men, to occupy them whilst he should make preparations. Some accepted these appointments; but most of them, when put to the proof, shrunk from returning to a country where they had suffered so many hardships.

The enterprising spirit of the stout hearted Juan de Añasco was somewhat broken by disappointment, and disgusted with the new world, where he had squandered his fortune, he returned to Spain. Juan Gaytan, the Treasurer, the brave Baltazar de Gallegos, the veteran Pedro Calderon, Alonso Romo de Cardeños, Arias Tinoco, and many others of less note, followed the example of De Añasco. Gomez Suarez de Figueroa returned home, to the estate of his father, the magnificent old cavalier, Vasco Porcallo de Figueroa. Some entered into the priesthood: a few remained in New Spain, among whom was the Governor, Luis de Moscoso de Alvorado, who married a relative, a woman of rank and riches in Mexico. The greatest number, however, went to seek their fortunes in Peru.

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CHAPTER XLIX.

The voyages of Maldonado and Gomez Arias in search of De Soto. Death of Doña Isabel de Bobadilla.

1543. To close this eventful history, it only remains to give some account of the movements of the two generous and loyal cavaliers Diego Maldonado and Gomez Arias. The former, as we have before related, set sail from Espiritu Santo, for the Havana, with two brigantines, to visit Doña Isabel de Bobadilla, the wife of the Governor Hernando de Soto; Gomez Arias having preceded him in a caravel. These two cavaliers were to procure vessels in Havana, load them with supplies of food and arms, and munitions of war, and sail for the Port of Achusi in the course of the following autumn, where De Soto, after exploring the interior of Florida, was to meet them.

They accordingly joined each other in the Havana, and, having sent to all the adjacent islands an account of the discovery of Florida, purchased three vessels and freighted them with supplies, and also loaded down the two brigantines and the

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caravel in which they came. They could, moreover, have laden two other vessels; for the inhabitants of the islands, hearing such a favourable report of Florida, prompted by their own interest as well as by their love for the Governor, sent all the provisions they could gather together.

The two captains set sail and reached in safety the Port of Achusi, but not finding De Soto there, they separated and coasted in opposite directions, thinking it probable that he might have come out at some other place, either to the eastward or westward. They left signals in the trees and letters in the crevices of the bark, with statements of their intended movements the following summer, and, after cruising about in vain until the winter set in, they returned dejected to the Havana. The subsequent summer of the year 1541, they re-visited the shores of Florida, running along the coast as far to the westward as Mexico, and a great distance to the eastward, but meeting with no success, they returned to the Havana on the approach of winter. Early the ensuing summer they again sailed for Florida, and after having consumed seven months in fruitless search, were compelled by the weather to return and winter in Cuba.

Determined, however, not to give up the search until they had discovered traces of De Soto, for

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they could not believe that every soul of the expedition had perished, as soon as the spring of 1543 opened, they once again put to sea. They cruised about all this summer, suffering grievous privations and excessive labour, and about the middle of October arrived at Vera Cruz. Here they heard the melancholy account that the Spaniards had abandoned Florida, that only three hundred of the gallant army had escaped, and that the Governor, Hernando de Soto, had perished in the country he sought to conquer. With these sad tidings the two faithful captains repaired to Havana, and imparted them to Doña Isabel de Bobadilla. During three long years she had been racked with anxiety for the safety of her husband, and now came the news of the failure of his magnificent enterprise, the loss of his vast treasures, the ruin of his estate, the downfall of his house, and his own melancholy death. It was an overwhelming blow; Doña Isabel never held up her head from this time, but died soon after of a broken heart.

Such was the fruitless and tragical end of the vaunted conquest of Florida: one of the most splendid and chivalrous expeditions to the new world, and one of the most disastrous. Never had a more gallant train of youthful cavaliers embarked on a crusade beyond the ocean; never had adventurers

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embarked with lighter hearts, more fearless souls, or more sanguine expectations. Their vaunting preparations in the island of Cuba, and their triumphant landing on the shores of Florida, partake of the swelling spirit of the nation and the age; nor is it possible to follow them through their subsequent career of blasted hope and baffled enterprise, without having our admiration incessantly elicited by their defiance of danger, their persevering struggles against difficulties and almost impossibilities, and their manly, unshrinking fortitude, under hardships of every kind.

If at times, our feelings revolt at the outrages committed by them, upon the poor Indians, and by their wrongs towards those native chieftains who fought and fell so heroically in the defence of their homes; yet, our indignation passes away and is forgotten in the melancholy fate of the invaders. Scarce three years had elapsed from the time of their embarkation at Cuba, when nearly the whole train of youthful cavaliers had passed away; horse and rider alike had perished, and their bones lay bleaching amidst the savage wilds of America!

THE END.

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APPENDIX.

As the principal authority cited in the foregoing work is Garcilaso de la Vega, a few particulars concerning him and his writings may be acceptable to the reader. He was a Peruvian by birth, a native of the city of Cuzco. His father was a Spanish adventurer of noble descent, and his mother the sister of Huayna Capac, the last of the renowned Incas. Hearing much in his youth of the land of his father, he left his country and repaired to Spain, where he took up his residence at Cordova, and soon distinguished himself by his translation of the dialogues of love of Leon Hebreos, and by his royal commentaries on the History of the Incas. These won him the favour of the sovereigns and the esteem of the learned. Don Gabriel Deza de Cardenas, in his preface to the second edition of Garcilaso's History of Florida, remarks, that he was admired by the world as a man of piety, virtue, modesty, and devotion to letters, and held in the highest estimation as a historian. He died in Cordova, in 1616, and was honourably interred in the Cathedral, in one of the chapels, called the chapel of Garcilaso; where monumental inscriptions on each side of the altar record his valour, his virtues, and his literary merits.

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Such is the general character of Garcilaso de la Vega; which will enable the reader in some measure to judge of his credibility as a historian. In his introduction to his work on Florida, he gives an account of the sources from whence he drew his facts. He says that he had frequently, and in divers places, held long conversations with an old friend, who had been present in the expedition of Hernando de Soto; and that, struck with the achievements both of Spaniards and Indians, related by this cavalier, he determined to rescue such heroic deeds from oblivion, by recording them in history. His laudable resolve was for a time, however, postponed. He was called to lay down the pen and take up the sword; other causes concurred to separate them, and thus twenty years elapsed before he could carry his plan into execution.

The desire, however, of perpetuating this heroic expedition, and the names of the brave men concerned in it, increased with his years; and, fearing that the death either of his friend or of himself, might defeat his wishes, he left his home and took up his residence for a time in the village where the cavalier resided. Here he took down the particulars of the expedition, as related by word of mouth, questioning and re-questioning his friend minutely and repeatedly, as to persons, and places, and transactions; thus stimulating his memory, and drawing piecemeal from it those anecdotes of individual prowess and adventure which give such stirring interest and vivacity to his narrative.

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He does not give the name of his friend, but says he was a brave soldier, who had been present in all the scenes of the expedition, and had many times acted as leader, in the exploits he related. He adds that he was of noble rank, a hidalgo, and as such, piqued himself on uttering nothing but the truth. Such confidence was placed in his veracity, that the council royal of the Indies frequently sent for him to consult him about the events that chanced in this and in other expeditions in which he had been engaged.

Beside the oral testimony of this cavalier, the Inca informs us that he had likewise written documents from two other soldiers who were engaged in the expedition. One of them, named Alonzo de Carmona, a native of the town of Priego, having returned to Spain, wrote his "Two Peregrinations," as he called them, in Florida and Peru. They contained brief notices of facts and circumstances, skipping from one remarkable transaction to another, without much regard to dates or places, or the regular succession of events. These memoirs he sent to Garcilaso de la Vega, for his inspection; not knowing at the time that he was occupied on a history of the expedition.

The other soldier was Juan Coles, a native of Zafra; who likewise wrote an irregular and brief notice of the principal events of the expedition. This he gave to a Franciscan monk, named Fray Pedro Aguado; who incorporated it in a collection of narratives relative to the

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new world, which he intended to publish. The manuscripts of the friar, however, remained in a crude and neglected state, in the hands of a printer in Cordova; where the Inca found them, covered with dust and half destroyed by rats. There was nearly a ream of paper, divided into quires, in the hand writing of the different narrators. From among these the Inca extracted the manuscript of Juan Coles, shortly after he had received that of Alonso de Carmona. At the time that these documents fell into his hands, he had already completed his narrative, as taken from the lips of his friend; but, having now two additional eye witnesses, he went over the whole subject anew, availing himself of the particulars thus unexpectedly furnished him, to corroborate, strengthen, and enlarge the details already recorded.

Such are the sources from whence Garcilaso de la Vega derived his facts, and for which we have the guarantee of his general character as a man of judgment and veracity. His account of the expedition of Hernando de Soto was held in such credit in former times, and by those most capable of judging, that it was incorporated almost at full length, by Herrera, the great Spanish historian. in his history of American discovery.

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ROUTE OF HERNANDO DE SOTO.

To assist any future research as to the route of Hernando de Soto and his followers, we here subjoin the various marchings, the distances and points of the compass, as gleaned from different parts of the Spanish and Portuguese narratives. They will be seen to be contradictory and exaggerated, and have frequently caused us great perplexity. We have endeavoured to guide ourselves through the maze they present, by certain general landmarks, and by the researches of various travellers.

Indeed, the Inca himself remarks, "I cannot hold myself responsible for the accuracy of the distances I give, for, although I have spared no exertion, and have used all diligence to arrive at the truth, yet I have been unavoidably compelled to leave much to conjecture. The Spaniards had no instruments with them by which they could compute distances; their main object was to conquer the country, and seek for silver and gold; consequently, they gave themselves but little trouble to note down the route."

De Soto and his followers, says the Inca, landed at the bay of Espiritu Santo, whence they marched a little more than two leagues in a north-east direction, and halted at the village of Hirrihigua: resuming their march to the north-east, a journey of twenty-five leagues brought them to the village of Urribarracuxi. Hence to

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the province of Acuera, where they next arrived, was twenty leagues. Departing from Acuera, and marching towards the north, and sometimes to the north-east, about twenty leagues, they came to the town of Ocali; here they crossed the river Ocali, and, journeying sixteen leagues, reached Ochile; a frontier village of the province of Vitachuco. The Spaniards, says the Inca, marched more than fifty leagues through this province. We next find them in the village of Vitachuco: setting out from thence, they marched four leagues, to the river of Osachile; crossing this, they continued on six leagues, and came to the village of Osachile. Twelve leagues further, they found the great swamp; traversing this, which was one league and a half across, they continued on six leagues, and were arrested by a deep stream:—having crossed this, they marched four leagues, to the chief village of Apalachee, where they went into winter quarters. The Inca states here, that the bay of Aute was about four leagues distant.

Leaving Apalachee, the ensuing spring, they marched to the northward five days, and came to the province of Atapaha: ten days more brought them to the province of Achalaque.* They were five days in traversing this province, and in four days more, came to the frontier village of the province of Cofa. Leaving this village,

* It will be seen, by referring to chap. xl. of our work, that we consider the Inca under a mistake in bringing them so soon to this province. We prefer the Portuguese account, which makes their arrival a month later.

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in six or seven days they came to the province of Cofaqui: from thence, a march of seven days brought them to a river; marching up this for twelve leagues, they came to a frontier village of the province of Cofachiqui; in four days more they arrived at Cofachiqui. Quitting this province, they came, at the end of eight days, to the province of Chalaque. Three days more brought them to the province of Xuala.

The Inca here observes, that the Spaniards were fifty-seven days marching from Apalachee to Xuala. He supposes that they must have marched about four leagues and a half a day; and that, consequently, Xuala must have been nearly two hundred and fifty leagues from the province of Apalachee, and about four hundred from the Bay of Espiritu Santo.

They now struck, he says, in a westwardly direction, making a bend to the south; and in five days came to the province of Guaxule. A march of six days more, or thirty leagues, brought them to Ychiaha: their next journey was to the village of Acoste, five leagues from Ychiaha. Leaving this, they traversed the province of Cosa, and in twenty-three or four days came to the village of Cosa, which was more than a hundred leagues distant from Acoste. Continuing onward towards the south, five days march brought them to the town of Talise; a journey of five or six days more found them in Tascaluza, and marching two leagues further, they halted in the town of Mauvila. From hence, De Soto, to

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avoid the sea, struck northwardly, and, marching seven days, came to the village of Chicaza. A league distant from this village was Chicacilla, where they passed the winter.

Setting out the following spring, the first place they arrived at was Alibamo, four or five leagues from Chicacilla: a march of three days brought them to the village of Chisca, on the banks of the Mississippi. Following up along the banks of this river four days, they crossed it, and marching four or five days longer, they came to the village of Casquin. A journey of six days brought them to Capaha; from hence the army returned to the village of Casquin. Leaving that town behind them, they continued down along the river nine days, when they reached the village of Quiguate. Still following the course of the river, in five days they came to Colima. The next province they reached was Tula, ten days' journey from the last; a march of six days more brought them to the town of Utiangue, where they wintered.

In the spring, the army resumed its wanderings, and in seven days came to the village of Naguatex. A march of five days brought them to the frontiers of the province of Guancane, which they were eight days in traversing. From hence they struck in a south-eastwardly direction, to reach the Mississippi. They traversed seven provinces, a distance, the Inca conjectures, of about one hundred and twenty leagues, and arrived

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at the province of Anilco. Marching through this province for thirty leagues, they came to the village of Anilco—a journey of four days further, brought them to the province of Guachoya, where De Soto died.

The army, he says, set out for the westward, under Luis de Moscoso, and marching more than a hundred leagues, came to the province of Auche. Continuing on for six or seven days, they arrived at the province of los Vaqueros: they penetrated more than thirty leagues into this province, when their westward march was arrested by the sight of lofty mountains. From hence they set out on their return to the Mississippi, and making a bend to the southward, arrived at the village of Aminoya, three months from the time of their departure from Guachoya. The whole distance of their march to the west of the Mississippi, going and returning, he computes to have been more than three hundred and fifty leagues.

Garcilaso de la Vega remarks, that it is difficult to give precisely the length of the voyage of the Spaniards down the Mississippi, as they were so engaged in fighting that they had not time to calculate the probable distance; but, he adds that sometime afterwards, in Mexico, they consulted among themselves, in the presence of some men skilled in maritime matters; and it was computed, that having had the aid of sails and oars, the average of a day and a night must have been about five and twenty leagues: and as they were nineteen days and nights in performing the voyage, the whole distance was

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not far short of five hundred leagues. According to the memorandum of Juan Coles, he says, it was considered seven hundred leagues. Garcilaso adds that the Mississippi, at Aminoya, was nineteen fathoms deep, and a quarter of a league wide; and that some persons, who pretended to a knowledge of cosmography, asserted, that from this place, where the Spaniards embarked, to where the river takes its rise, was three hundred leagues, and some aver much more; but I adopt, says he, the opinion most within bounds, which would make this river eight hundred leagues in extent, which was the distance the Spaniards penetrated into the country.

Having given a sketch of the route as stated by the Inca in his Narrative, we annex a memorandum of the route according to the Portuguese Narrator.

From the port of the Holy Ghost, (Espiritu Santo,) he says, the army marched round the bay about two leagues, and came to the town of Ucita: from thence they went thirty leagues to the province of Paracoxi: marching on, through the small villages Acela and Jocaste, they came to Cale: leaving Cale, they passed through Itara and Potano, and on the third day came to Utimama. They next came to a habitation, which he says the Spaniards called de Mala paz, and from thence went to Cholupaba. Here they crossed a river, and having marched two days, arrived at Caliquen; five days' march brought them to Napetaca: continuing on by Pe-

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laya, they next reached Uzachil—in two days' march they came to Axille. Having crossed a river, they halted in Vitachuco, a village of the province of Palache. Passing through the town of Uzelu, they came to Anhayca of Palache, where they went into winter quarters. He says the sea was only ten leagues distant from this place.

On the third of March they left Anhayca of Palache, and came to Capachiqui on the eleventh; continuing on, they arrived at Toalli on the twenty-first of the same month. Leaving Toalli the twenty-third, they crossed a river and came to Achese. Resuming their journey on the first of April, they were at Altaraca on the fourth, and arrived at Ocute on the tenth: they parted from Ocute on the twelfth, and passing through Cofaqui, they came to Patofa. The narrator here observes, that it is fifty leagues from Ocute to Patofa, and not less than three hundred and sixty leagues from Ocute to Espiritu Santo.

Leaving Patofa, they marched nine days, at the rate of seven or eight leagues a day, crossing two large rivers, and encamped in a desert. From hence they marched about twelve or thirteen leagues, and came to a small village called Aymay—they next arrived at the province of Cutifachiqui, two days' journey distant from Aymay. Departing from Cutifachiqui, they marched a hundred leagues in this province, and came to Chalaque—a journey of five days more brought them to the province of Xualla. The narrator observes here, that from Ocute

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to Cutifachiqui, it is reckoned a hundred and thirty leagues, and from Cutifachiqui to Xualla, two hundred and fifty. Leaving Xualla, they came in five days to Quaxule—two days' march brought them to Canasaqua: they journeyed on five days, and came to Chiaha. The next town they reached was Acoste, seven days' journey distant. On the ninth of July the army left Acoste, and went to Tali; and thence to Cosa, where they arrived on the fifteenth. They parted from Cosa on the twentieth, and passing through Tallimuchase, Ulliballi, and Toasi, arrived at Tallise on the eighteenth of September. The narrator remarks in this place, that they usually marched five or six leagues a day in countries that were inhabited; but in the wilderness they journeyed as far as possible, lest they should be straitened for want of provisions. He says, that it is computed that Tascaluza is twenty leagues south of Cosa—Cosa one hundred and eighty leagues west of Xualla—Xualla two hundred and fifty leagues north of Cutifachiqui—Cutifachiqui four hundred and thirty leagues north-east of Palache—and Palache one hundred west from Espiritu Santo.—Leaving Tallise, the Spaniards passed through Casiste, and came to the town of Piache; here they crossed a wide river, and continuing on, arrived at Maville the eighteenth of October. They departed from Maville the eighteenth of November, and in five days entered the province of Pafallaya: they passed through the villages of Taliepatave and Cabusto, and crossing a wide river,

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arrived at Chicasa, on the eighteenth of December. Here they went into winter quarters.

Resuming their march in the spring, they came to the village of Alimamu—hence they journeyed seven days, and arrived at Quizquiz: a march of half a league brought them to the Mississippi. From Tascaluza to the great river, observes the narrator, we reckon three hundred leagues.

Crossing this river, they marched a league and a half, to a village in the province of Aquixo; continuing on, they came to the village of Casqui—they next reached the village of Pacaha, about a day's journey distant from Casqui. Returning to the latter place, they continued their march, and arrived at Quigate, which was one hundred and twenty leagues from Pacaha.

Leaving Quigate, they marched about forty leagues to the province of Coligoa. Five days more brought them to Palisema: they next came to Tafalicoya. Four days' journey distant was the province of Cayas, which they entered, and halted in the town of Tanico. After a march of three days they came to Tulla: they next arrived, at the end of five days, at Quipana. Continuing onward, they passed through Anoixi and Catamaya, and arrived at Autiamque, where they passed the winter.

Setting out from Autiamque on the sixth of March, they passed through the province of Ayays, and came to the town of Tultelpina. After three days' march, they arrived at Tianto; and the next day, the fifteenth

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of March, they came to Nilco. Soon after, they came to Guachoya, where De Soto dies. Luis de Moscoso set out on the fifth of June, and passing through the province of Catalte arrived at Chaguate on the twentieth. Three days' journey from thence brought them to the province of Aguacay. They continued on, and passing by Pato, on the fourth day came to the province of Maye:—they next reached Naguatex. At the end of three days' march, they came to the small hamlet of Missobone: thence they passed through Lacane, Mondacao, and the province of Aays, and arrived at Socatino. After twenty days' march, they came to the province of Guasco. They continued on to the river Daycao, ten days' journey from Guasco, where they arrived in the beginning of October. The narrator says here, that from Daycao to the great river it was one hundred and fifty leagues, which they had travelled, marching always to the westward.

From hence they set out on their return, and passing through Naguatex, Chaguete, and the town of Cilano, arrived at Nilco in the beginning of December: from thence they went two days' journey to Minoya. Here they embarked upon the Mississippi. Their course, he says, continued seventeen days, in which time they made two hundred and fifty leagues.

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CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

The Spaniards resume their march. The Princess of Cofachiqui carried away captive. A mutiny. The army traverse the territory of the Cherokees. Escape of the young Princess. Juan Terron and his pearls, . . 5

CHAPTER II.

Arrival of the army at Guaxule. Reception of the Spaniards by the Cacique of Ychiaha. Two troopers despatched to the mountains in search of gold, and what success they had, ... 13

CHAPTER III

The manner in which the Indians extracted the pearls from the shell. Generosity of a soldier. What befell Luis Bravo de Xeres while fishing, ... 17

CHAPTER IV.

How they were treated by the Cacique of Acoste, at whose village they arrived. The manner in which the young Cacique, Cosa, came forth to meet them. The Indians show a hostile disposition. The Cacique Cosa escorts them to Talise, and why, ... 21

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER V.

PAGE

The gigantic Chieftain, Tuscaluza. His haughty reception of the Spaniards. Great sufferings of the army for the want of salt. Strange malady occasioned thereby, ... 29

CHAPTER VI.

Tuscaloosa, his steed and raiment. His village. Mysterious disappearance of two soldiers. Arrival at the village of Mauvila, ... 34

CHAPTER VII.

The disastrous battle of Mauvila, ... 40

CHAPTER VIII.

Fall of Tuscaloosa, ... 55

CHAPTER IX.

The plight of the Spaniards after the battle of Mauvila, 61

CHAPTER X.

De Soto becomes an altered man, and why, . . . 67

CHAPTER XI.

The Adelantado breaks up his encampment at Mauvila. Manner of crossing a river. The pass stoutly defended by the Indians, ... 71

CHAPTER XII.

De Soto sends a messenger to the natives with offers of peace. Encamp in a Chickasaw village. Two soldiers condemned to death, ... 77

CHAPTER XIII.

The desperate battle of Chicaza, ... 82

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XIV.

PAGE

The Spaniards remove to Chicacilla. Occurrences there. The exploit of Juan de Guzman. The invention of one of the soldiers as a protection against the cold, . . 88

CHAPTER XV.

Juan de Añasco, and a detachment of horse and foot, have a brush with the natives; and how he was taunted by them. Storming of the fortress of Alibamo. Challenge of an Indian warrior, and how he fared in consequence, ... 92

CHAPTER XVI.

The Spaniards come in sight of the Mississippi. The Cacique Chisca—his hostile movements, . . . 99

CHAPTER XVII.

The Spaniards prepare to cross the Mississippi. A Cacique, with a fleet of canoes, comes to visit the Governor:—the result of their interview. Passage of the Mississippi. Arrival among the Kaskaskias Indians, 104

CHAPTER XVIII.

A religious ceremony on the banks of the Mississippi, 111

CHAPTER XIX.

Expedition against the Cacique Capaha. His village is sacked. Fortifies himself in an Island, where he is again assailed. The Spaniards deserted by their allies, the Casquins, ... 115

CHAPTER XX.

Interview between the Cacique Capaha and De Soto. His two beautiful wives, and their fate, . . . 123

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XXI.

PAGE
Two soldiers despatched in search of salt and gold, and the account they brought back. The Spaniards arrive at Quiguate. Juan Gaytan refuses to perform his duty, and what De Soto did thereupon, ... 127

CHAPTER XXII.

The Spaniards arrive at Coligoa—pass through the province of Palisema, into the country of the Tunicas. The manner in which the natives made salt. Enter the province of Tula. Attack upon an Indian village. Struggle between a soldier and five women, ... 131

CHAPTER XXIII.

What the Spaniards found in the village of Tula. The tribe of Tula differed from any Indians they had seen. They fall suddenly upon the encampment at night. The prowess of an Indian, and his fate, ... 136

CHAPTER XXIV.

The army arrives at Utiangue. The Governor determines to winter there. Preparations accordingly. Death of Juan Ortiz, the interpreter, ... 140

CHAPTER XXV.

Change in the views and plans of De Soto. He turns his steps towards the Mississippi. A soldier drowned in attempting to cross a lake. The Spaniards pass through the province of Anilco. Hostile bearing of the Cacique. Arrival at Guachoya, ... 146

CHAPTER XXVI.

Meeting between De Soto and the Cacique Guachoya. Añasco despatched to seek for the sea. Expedition by land and water, against the Chieftain Anilco, and the result, ... 152

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XXVII.

PAGE

Difficulties with the Cacique of Quigualtanqui. Illness and death of De Soto, ... 159

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The burial of De Soto. The Cacique sends two young Indians to be sacrificed to his manes. What Luis de Moscoso said in reply. Disposal of the Governor's effects, - - - - - - - - - - - 167

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Spaniards, under the command of Luis de Moscoso, commence their march to the westward. Arrival at the province of Chaguate—where they find salt, - - 173

CHAPTER XXX.

Disappearance of Diego de Guzman. Cause of his desertion, - - - - - - - - - - - 178

CHAPTER XXXI.

The army arrives at Naguatex: have a severe brush with the natives. Imminent peril of two troopers and four foot soldiers, and their rescue. Severe treatment of the Indian captives. Singular interview between the Cacique Naguatex and Moscoso. The Spaniards perplexed by a phenomenon, - - - - - - 183

CHAPTER XXXII.

Vague tidings of Europeans to the West. Wandering in a wilderness. Treachery of an Indian guide, and his fate. The hunting grounds of the Far West, - 189

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Feats of individual prowess of the Indians of the Far West, - - - - - - - - - - - 194

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

PAGE
The Spaniards come in sight of high mountains to the west. Exploring parties sent out to discover the country:—the report they bring back. Moscoso calls a council of his officers—their determination, - - 19

CHAPTER XXXV.

Harassing march of the Spaniards. The trooper:—his misadventure, - - - - - - - - - 20

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Francisco, the Genoese, with several of his comrades lie in ambush to entrap some of the natives. The severe skirmish they have with an Indian, and the result, - 207

CHAPTER XXXVII.

They pass through the province of Chaguate, and Moscoso despatches a party of twelve troopers after Diego de Guzman. Sufferings of the army. Their arrival at the province of Anilco, and their despondency. Cheered up by news of the fertile country of Aminoya. Añasco despatched to that province—and what he found there, - - - - - - - - - - - 211

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The Spaniards arrive at Aminoya. Commence building brigantines. Quarrel between the Cacique Guachoya and the Captain-General of Anilco. Singular challenge of the latter, - - - - - - - - - 217

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The league of the Caciques against the Spaniards. Gonzalo Silvestre roughly handles an Indian. How the designs of the hostile Caciques were frustrated, - - 225

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